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82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION 2010: THE RIGHT FORCE STRUCTURE  
FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE  
General Studies

by

THOMAS E. HIEBERT, MAJ, USA  
B.S., United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, 1987

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
2000

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE


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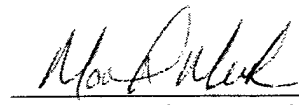
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION 2010: THE RIGHT FORCE STRUCTURE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, by MAJ Thomas E. Hiebert, USA, 105 pages.

This study investigates the likely optimal force structure for the 82nd Airborne Division in 2010, in light of future doctrinal and strategic requirements.

As the United States strategic reserve, the 82nd Airborne Division has a requirement to be able to deploy and fight to win anywhere in the world on a moment's notice. The study examines the history of the United States Army's airborne division from the Second World War until the present day, emphasizing the relevance of this capability under contemporary and future conditions. This study also examines the most likely structure options to meet future requirements and compares these options with each other in accordance with appropriate force capability criteria.

This study concludes with a proposed likely optimal structure for the 82nd Airborne Division in 2010. The proposed structure provides recommendations for armament and weapons systems within the 82nd Airborne Division for the twenty-first century.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	After Action Report
AGS	Armored Gun System
ASOP	Airborne Standing Operating Procedures
DISCOM	Division Support Command
DIVARTY	Division Artillery
DRB	Division Ready Brigade
DRF	Division Ready Force
FM	Field Manual
IBCT	Initial Brigade Combat Team
JTF	Joint Task Force
LIC	Low-Intensity Conflict
MARG	Maritime Amphibious Ready Group
METL	Mission Essential Task List
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MTOE	Modified Table of Organization and Equipment
MTW	Major Theater War
PIR	Parachute Infantry Regiment
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RSOP	Readiness Standing Operating Procedures
TOW	Tube-Launched, Optically Tracked, Wire-Guided (Antitank Missile)



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The airborne division can rapidly deploy anywhere in the world to seize and secure vital objectives. It conducts parachute assaults to capture initial lodgments, execute large-scale tactical raids, secure intermediate staging bases or forward operating bases for ground and air operations, or rescue US nationals besieged overseas. It can also serve as a strategic or theater reserve as well as reinforcement for forward-presence forces.<sup>1</sup>

FM 71-100, *Division Operations*

During the Second World War, the United States of America developed a viable forced entry capability in the form of its Army airborne force. The capability was developed because, as General George C. Marshall wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in early 1944, "successful execution of the European invasion plan that I recently presented in your name to the authorities in London involves the employment of large numbers of highly trained parachutists and air-borne troops."<sup>2</sup> Armed and equipped with three full divisions of airborne forces, the United States Army exercised this revolutionary new capability twelve times during the period November 1942 through March 1945. Though the implementation of airborne forces enjoyed a varying degree of success throughout the war, the possession of such a capability enabled the United States Army to enter any theater of operations, at any time it chose, without having previously established supply lines and lines of communications.

Since the Second World War, however, the United States has exercised its forced entry capability in combat only five times, including only twice in the past twenty years. Yet, the United States Army still maintains a fully manned airborne division of nearly 15,000 paratroopers, ostensibly serving as the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) and

strategic forced entry capability for the United States. At the same time, there are many opponents of this asset, those who claim that the airborne division and its inherent capabilities are obsolete and unnecessary in future warfare. Airborne forces are also viewed as far too costly in an era of reduced spending and smaller military budgets. Furthermore, the same opponents of the airborne division claim that even if the funding were available to maintain and sustain the division, the United States Air Force does not possess the strategic lift assets required to deliver the entire division, or even an airborne brigade task force, into a designated objective area.

### Research Question

Since the development of United States Army airborne, forced entry capabilities doctrine and subsequent employment of these capabilities in combat throughout the Second World War, the United States Army has undergone significant changes, both in force structure and force capability. The end of the Cold War drastically reduced the nature of the threat, while the pace of technology has accelerated to produce what many believe is a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). These and other developments have challenged the Army to redesign its force and structure and to refocus its capabilities in light of changing national military strategy at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Strategic reevaluation also necessitates reassessment of the usefulness and applicability of the United States Army's airborne doctrine, both as it applies to today's threat and that of the foreseeable future. This thesis examines the relevance of United States Army airborne operations as a component of future United States Army doctrine and an instrument of United States national military strategy. Inherent in the examination is a consideration of what might be the optimal structure of the conventional United

States Army airborne division, the 82nd Airborne Division, in the twenty-first century. Specifically, this thesis answers the question: What is the most optimal force structure for 82nd Airborne Division in light of future doctrinal and strategic requirements in the twenty-first century?

In the course of answering this question, the study also serves to answer related subordinate questions. First, the author analyzes contemporary capabilities and limitations of the 82nd Airborne Division to determine whether the current Mission Essential Task List (METL) is both necessary and executable in the context of United States national military strategy in the twenty-first century. Second, the author examines the strategic airlift assets that currently exist within the United States Air Force to determine whether enough airframes exist--or are projected to be in the force in the twenty-first century--at the strategic or national strategic and theater strategic levels to deliver the 82nd Airborne Division into a forced entry combat operation. Third, the author addresses the issues raised by this question: Is there any need for an entire division of airborne forces? Consequently, this thesis examines other options that are available in terms of a larger and smaller forced entry capable force that possess similar capabilities and firepower equal to the current 82nd Airborne Division. Finally, this thesis examines, in detail, future capabilities that are necessary to make the United States Army's airborne division compatible with the requirements of twenty-first century conflict.

#### Operational Terms and Definitions

In order to completely understand this thesis, a working knowledge of the terms referenced throughout the discussion is necessary. Key terms and definitions in this thesis include:

Airborne Insertion Operations: Operations involving the air movement into an objective area (or drop zone) of combat forces and their logistic support by air for the execution of a tactical, operational, or strategic mission. Combat airborne insertion operations are those subsets of airborne insertion operations conducted during actual warfare.<sup>3</sup>

Division Ready Brigade (DRB): The designation of the infantry brigade task force and its slice support elements that are prepared for and in a readiness posture for any possible contingency operation. The DRB consists of the Division Ready Force (DRF) 1, 2, and 3 airborne infantry battalions, an airborne field artillery battalion, and designated combat support and combat service support elements.<sup>4</sup>

Division Ready Force (DRF): The designation of the infantry battalion task forces into a readiness posture within the DRB and the 82nd Airborne Division. Each of the nine infantry battalions within the division are designated the DRF One through Nine, indicating their specific required level of readiness.<sup>5</sup>

XVIIIth Airborne Corps: The strategic RDF for the United States of America. The parent headquarters of the 82nd Airborne Division and the United States Army's largest warfighting organization. It is the only corps headquarters in the United States Army with the ability to deploy into a forcible entry environment, and it exercises control over approximately 85,000 soldiers.<sup>6</sup>

Eighteen-Hour Sequence: The eighteen-hour planning sequence used by both the XVIIIth Airborne Corps and the 82nd Airborne Division to prepare the DRB for deployment and subsequent airborne assault. The sequence begins at Notification (N)

Hour and ends at N+18:00, at which time the Division Ready Force One is taking off (wheels up) from the departure airfield.<sup>7</sup>

82nd Airborne Division: The only airborne division in the United States Army as well as the only division in the United States military arsenal with a forced entry capability. The division maintains a DRB which is fully trained and prepared to respond to any contingency in the world within eighteen hours of notification. The mission of the 82nd Airborne Division is to deploy world wide within eighteen hours of notification, execute a combat parachute assault, conduct forcible entry operations to seize an airfield, build up combat power as quickly as possible, and conduct follow-on military operations.<sup>8</sup>

Forced Entry: The aggregation of military personnel, weapon systems, vehicles, and necessary support, or combinations thereof, embarked for the purpose of gaining access through land, air, or amphibious operations to an objective area; operations may be opposed or unopposed.<sup>9</sup>

Force Projection: The movement of military forces from the continental United States (CONUS) or within a theater in response to requirements of war or operations other than war.<sup>10</sup>

Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA): A profound change in the overall capability and operating "style" of military forces, normally stemming from increases in technology, that alter the manner in which nations fight war.<sup>11</sup>

Strategic Brigade Airdrop (SBA): The name given to the United States Air Force doctrine governing the concept of the Air Force's strategic lift capability designed to

transport and deliver by parachute assault one brigade task force of the 82nd Airborne Division, and to drop the entire brigade into the target area within thirty minutes.<sup>12</sup>

### Limitations and Approaches

In examining the most likely optimal structure for the conventional forced entry capability at the division level in the United States Army, this study surveys the history of United States Army combat airborne insertion operations. Emphasis falls on those operations and joint exercises which have occurred in the past decade, all of which provide additional insights into this thesis. This survey begins with a brief description of the combat airborne insertion operations that were executed in the Second World War, Korea, and Vietnam, primarily focusing on how the doctrine and the capabilities were first developed and how they evolved during the past fifty years. More recent and relevant airborne operations, those that have occurred within the past twenty years, are then discussed, focusing on OPERATION URGENT FURY, the invasion of Grenada, on 23 October 1983, and OPERATION JUST CAUSE, the invasion of Panama, on 20 December 1989. Analysis of these operations focuses on the employment of the forced entry capability and its effect on the outcome of the respective operations.

Furthermore, two recent operations, OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, the 82nd Airborne Division invasion of Haiti on 20 September 1994, which was “stood down” before its final execution, and EXERCISE CENTRAZBAT, a joint and combined exercise which commenced with the airborne insertion of elements of the 505th PIR into Khazakstan on 15 September 1997, are analyzed to determine how the employment of the forced entry capability is exercised today. These examples afford insight into what the future holds for the capability.



As the United States Army and Department of Defense possess only one division-level airborne force, the 82nd Airborne Division, the issue of conventional forced entry capability cannot be properly discussed without defining the mission and outlining the capabilities and limitations of the 82nd Airborne Division as they exist today. This discussion includes a study of the METL that the division trains on in order to execute its wartime mission, and an assessment of whether this METL is relevant at the operational level in view of the evolving strategic vision for the United States military in the twenty-first century. Discussion extends to the 82nd Airborne Division's DRB mission system and the methodical mission/training/support rotation system that the division executes in order to maintain its combat readiness.

An understanding of the joint dimension of the United States Army's airborne, forced entry capability is also critical to understanding the thesis question. The United States Air Force doctrine governing the delivery of airborne forces to the battlefield is known as the Strategic Brigade Airdrop (SBA) concept.<sup>13</sup> Past, present, and proposed Strategic Brigade Airdrop doctrines are examined to determine how the United States Air Force's lift capability and potential will affect the future of the airborne, forced entry capability. All current and proposed future strategic airlift resources that the United States Air Force will utilize to execute the Strategic Brigade Airlift mission have been studied in detail, to include a discussion of recent tests involving the C-17.

Finally, an examination and understanding of the threat as it relates to present and future airborne, forced entry operations capability is also central to this thesis. Past, present, and projected threats to United States national security are surveyed to demonstrate how the airborne, forced entry capability of the United States corresponds

with the perception of the threat in the past, and, thus, how it must be designed to combat the projected threat of the future.

### Delimitations

Because the focus of the thesis falls solely on United States Army airborne insertion operations and a forced entry capability in the United States Army, this study does not use historical or operational examples from nations other than the United States. This assertion does not negate the fact that the Germans in the Second World War and the Soviet Army of the Cold War provide excellent examples of the employment of large-scale airborne forces, both during training and in combat.

Also, because this thesis emphasizes the conventional capabilities and requirements in the United States Army at the division level, the study will not include a discussion of the capabilities provided by Special Operations forces of the United States Armed Forces. These forces include the United States Army Rangers and Special Forces, and the Navy Sea, Air and Land (SEAL) teams. However, this study does examine possible alternatives to a division of airborne forces and lays out dissenting views on the employment of airborne forces by the United States Army at the division level.

This study does not address the strategic forced entry capabilities provided by other joint components, most notably the United States Marine Corps through the amphibious assault capabilities of its Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) doctrine. The Marine Corps possesses a unique capability in its MEU, but it is still constrained by its requirement to project power from a sea-based platform. With the exception of its Force Reconnaissance companies, the Marine Corps cannot execute forcible entry operations

via parachute assault. Thus, it cannot project power worldwide, as the 82nd Airborne Division does.

Despite the Chief of Staff of the Army's ongoing restructuring initiative, currently labeled the Initial Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), this present survey does not incorporate the IBCT as a possible option for force structure change within the 82nd Airborne Division. The 82nd Airborne Division must remain untouched by this initiative, in order to retain its strategic forced entry capability. The addition, or substitution, of a brigade of motorized vehicles will certainly enhance the tactical maneuverability of the division, but at a huge--and unfeasible--cost to strategic mobility and sustainability.

Further, this thesis does not address budgetary constraints. The author has assumed that all future force structure and equipment modifications will be fully funded and that a lack of such funding will not be a limiting factor in the selection of a new model. The author has also assumed that those weapons systems projected for employment in the recommended force structure will be funded completely and not inhibit the capabilities of the force.

Finally, as the Army's and the 82nd Airborne Division's actual go-to-war concept plans (CONPLANS) are subject to classification, all close-hold discussion of how the division plans to meet these mission requirements is omitted from this thesis, along with classified United States Air Force airlift data related to the operational execution of the Strategic Brigade Airdrop concept.

### Research Design

This thesis provides both a historical as well as a doctrine-based analysis of the current and future requirements for United States Army airborne, forced entry capability.

Most importantly, it provides a framework for determining the likely optimal force structure for this capability in the twenty-first century. It also answers related subordinate questions inherent in this specific research project. These questions include: (1) a determination of whether the current METL tasks assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division are both necessary and executable in the context of United States national military strategy in the twenty-first century; (2) a consideration of the two crucial issues of the availability of strategic United States Air Force airlift assets, and whether the United States Air Force maintains the airframes required at the strategic level to deliver the 82nd Airborne Division into a forced entry combat operation, now and in the future; and finally, (3) an understanding of future requirements, including most importantly, the ability to apply the new capabilities and optimal force structure to meet the threats facing the United States in the century ahead.

This research project accomplishes these objectives by first defining and isolating the research question and by placing the research question into its proper context. In this case, that context is one of the current restructuring initiative that is occurring throughout the United States Army with the Initial Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) initiative. Though the author believes that the 82nd Airborne Division should remain detached from this specific restructuring departure, the research demonstrates that the 82nd itself requires restructuring in order to meet the strategic requirements of the twenty-first century.

In addressing these and related issues, the author engaged in the research process in which he gathered material from a wide variety of sources in order to definitively answer the research question. The source material belonged chiefly to three distinct categories of literature: historical records, contemporary doctrine, and contemporary

open-source threat assessment literature. The research involved an analysis of this material in detail.

The author also studied the current task organization and mission requirements of the current 82nd Airborne Division in detail in order to determine the requirements for the force of the twenty-first century. The current force structure was juxtaposed with three other potential force structure models, all of which met clearly defined feasibility screening criteria.

Finally, the author compared the four force structure models using six essential and easily measurable evaluation criteria. The results, presented in a table that provides a quantitative analysis of the force structure comparison, are the basis for the author's ultimate conclusions and recommendations for a future force structure. The research project concludes with the author's recommendation for a future force structure for the 82nd Airborne Division of 2010.

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<sup>1</sup>United States Army, FM 71-100, *Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 28 August 1996), 1-6.

<sup>2</sup>George C. Marshall, *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, ed. Larry I. Bond (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 172.

<sup>3</sup>United States Army, FM 101-5-1, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 30 September 1997), 112.

<sup>4</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, *Readiness Standing Operating Procedures* (Fort Bragg, NC: June 1995), 1-1.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>Eighteenth Airborne Corps, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 7-8.

<sup>7</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, *Readiness Standing Operating Procedures*, 11-A-1 through 11-A-26.

<sup>8</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 2-3.

<sup>9</sup>United States Army, FM 101-5-1, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 30 December 1997), 114.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>11</sup>Rachel Bronson and Daniel Goure, "The Diplomatic Consequences of the Coming RMA," *Foreign Service Journal* (September 1998): 24.

<sup>12</sup>Eighteenth Airborne Corps, "Strategic Brigade Airdrop" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 2-3.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The data required to support this thesis comes from a variety of sources, which, for the purpose of the study, can be divided into three distinct categories. The first category consists of historical records, including those found in nonfictional literature and analyses from the Combat Studies Institute of the Command and General Staff College. The second category consists of contemporary airborne doctrine, including joint publications, United States Army FMs, and United States Air Force policy papers. The third and final category consists of open-source contemporary threat assessment literature, obtained primarily from the Department of Defense, the United States Department of State, and other strategic “think tanks” not officially connected to the United States government.

The historical records consulted throughout the research project laid the groundwork for the discussion of past United States Army airborne operations and exercises. These records do not prove or disprove the thesis, but, rather, they provide the reader with case studies on which to test the analysis and conclusions set forth throughout the thesis.

Beginning with the Second World War, documentation on the advent and employment of United States Army airborne soldiers into battle is truly extensive. Michael Hickey’s *Out of the Sky: A History of Airborne Warfare*; Edwin P. Hoyt’s *Airborne: The History of American Parachute Forces*; and Maurice Tugwell’s *Airborne to Battle* are all amazingly accurate secondary accounts of United States Army airborne operations from their initial conception in 1940 until the end of the Vietnam War. All

three provide excellent insight into how the airborne, forced entry capability was first conceived, and how it has been employed throughout modern military history.

The quintessential secondary resource used to confirm background information for the research project was undeniably Gerard M. Devlin's *Paratrooper!: The Saga of U.S. Army and Marine Parachute and Glider Combat Troops During World War II*. Devlin, himself a United States Army paratrooper in the Second World War, provides remarkable clarity and insight into the evolution of the airborne capability prior to the Second World War, as well as great detail on the employment of airborne forces throughout the war. Devlin uses many primary sources to lend credibility to his own research project, thus magnifying the utility of his own book for future research efforts.

The memoirs of the preeminent American strategic practitioners of the era General George C. Marshall, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and General Omar N. Bradley were also invaluable to this research project. The life stories of these officers are replete with discussions of both the utility of and the necessity for a large-scale airborne, forced entry capable unit to outflank the Germans--and later the Japanese--and bring the Second World War to a rapid conclusion. The memoirs of these officers show how practitioners turned to this new and evolutionary tactical employment means to augment existing war plans, including those for the attack of the German southern flank through the invasion of Italy in the Second World War.

Even more useful are the memoirs of the founding fathers of airborne warfare General Matthew D. Ridgway, General James M. Gavin, and General Maxwell D. Taylor. Because these pioneers of airborne warfare oversaw the evolution of the tactics that this thesis put to the test, their insights are invaluable--and relevant--even today.



Also, because Generals Ridgway, Gavin, and Taylor went on to distinguished senior military and diplomatic careers following their early leadership roles in the airborne infantry, they are well qualified to provide personal insights and expertise with respect to the larger strategic picture. General Gavin, who commanded the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment during the airborne invasions of Sicily and Normandy, and then commanded the 82nd Airborne Division from 28 August 1944 through 26 March 1948, served the United States Army for nearly thirty years, retiring in 1958 as the Commanding General of VIIth Corps in Europe.<sup>1</sup> General Gavin was himself an ardent student and proponent of airborne operations, and his study, *Airborne Warfare*, published in 1947, remains to this day the authoritative work on the utility of the airborne insertion capability in warfare. General Gavin's insights into the airborne force of the future are incredibly forward thinking and have provided an excellent analysis base for the project at hand.

Contemporary authors also afford significant insight into the most recent forced entry operations, most notably OPERATION URGENT FURY in Grenada in October 1983, OPERATION JUST CAUSE in December 1989, and OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY in September 1994. Daniel Bolger's *Americans at War* paints a very detailed picture of the planning issues surrounding the invasion of Grenada. Bolger explains why the decision was made to employ the United States Army Ranger Regiment in a forced entry role, and not the 82nd Airborne Division.

Because OPERATION JUST CAUSE was the most recent employment of the 82nd Airborne Division in a forced entry role into an actual combat environment, the invasion of Panama has left significant literature in its wake. Bob Woodward's *The Commanders*

is the definitive open-source account of the decisions that were made at the National Command Authority level during both OPERATION JUST CAUSE and OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/STORM with respect to the employment of the 82nd Airborne Division in an airborne, forced entry role. Woodward recounts decisions made by the President and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, all of which provide pro and con arguments over the utility of the possible employment of the 82nd Airborne Division. Clarence Briggs' *Just Cause* provides a detailed discussion into the tactical employment of the 82nd Airborne Division into Panama, while the Center for Army Lessons Learned publication *Operation Just Cause: Lessons Learned* provides candid feedback from all levels on the effectiveness of the forced entry capability.

Perhaps the most useful work of contemporary literature on the employment of the airborne, forced entry capability is Cynthia Hayden's *JTF-180: Operation Uphold Democracy, Oral History and Interviews*. Dr. Hayden's oral history of OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, the United States intervention in Haiti in September 1994, provides great detail on the planning, preparation, rehearsal, and near execution of the largest forced entry combat operation since the Second World War. She interviewed hundred of participants in the operation, from the Commanding General XVIIIth Airborne Corps, Lieutenant General Henry H. Shelton, to the operational planners at the corps and division level to the battalion commanders who were to execute the plan. The 82nd Airborne Division's After Action Report (AAR) from the operation complements Dr. Hayden's oral history.

In addition to historical materials, contemporary doctrine at the Joint, United States Army, and United States Air Force levels provides invaluable background data to

support this research project. Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* and United States Army FMs 100-5, *Operations*, and 71-100, *Division Operations*, all treat the nature and definition of forced entry. This definition is expanded through the use of FM 90-26, *Airborne Operations*, and FM 7-30, *The Infantry Brigade (Airborne and Air Assault) Operations*. The latter two manuals are invaluable in providing the details required to fully understand the doctrinal requirements of the United States Army forced entry capability.

In conjunction with these doctrinal manuals, this research project relied heavily on the use of specific warfighting documents from the 82nd Airborne Division and the XVIIIth Airborne Corps. These included the respective Readiness Standing Operating Procedures (RSOP) and Airborne Standing Operating Procedures (ASOP) from the corps and the division, as well as the respective capabilities briefings, all of which serve to define the warfighting skills and METL tasks on which the 82nd Airborne Division currently follows to maintain its warfighting proficiency. These documents, when placed alongside the joint and Army-level publications, serve to close the loop between theory at the strategic and operational level and the doctrinal execution at the tactical level.

Building on these doctrinal warfighting manuals is an excellent discussion of contemporary airborne doctrine and capabilities from a very unlikely source. Techno-novelist Tom Clancy spent nearly six months observing the 82nd Airborne Division in training from 1996 to 1997.<sup>2</sup> The result, *Airborne: A Guided Tour of an Airborne Task Force*, is a detailed examination of all facets of the airborne division in operation, from the procedures for airborne, forced entry employment, to tactical field training, to live fire execution at every level within the division. In his forward to the book, General Gary E.

Luck, the former Commanding General of both the 82nd Airborne Division and the XVIIIth Airborne Corps, says that Clancy's book is "both interesting and informative," and it describes in detail "the traditions, standards, dedication, and a view to the future of the XVIIIth Airborne Corps" and the 82nd Airborne Division.<sup>3</sup>

Understanding United States Air Force doctrine as it relates to the employment or delivery of a large-scale conventional airborne force into a combat forced entry environment forms a critical component of this research project. Although the United States Air Force Air Mobility Command (AMC) is the controlling headquarters for the SBA design, the Air Force Liaison Officer assigned to the Headquarters, XVIIIth Airborne Corps, G3 (Operations), is the responsible agent for the testing, rehearsal, and execution of the concept.

The XVIIIth Airborne Corps produced a comprehensive information brief outlining the history of the program, detailing its key components, and documenting milestones for implementation of the program in the future. This information brief proved to be one of the most valuable resources for the entire research process. The document enables the author to ascertain exactly what the United States Air Force goals and expectations are for the SBA program, compare them with Army expectations, and determine whether the joint force capabilities are compatible for the future. Up-to-date information provided by both AMC and the XVIIIth Airborne Corps about ongoing testing of the Air Force's future airborne delivery platform, the C-17 Globemaster, is also a valuable component of the aerial delivery aspect of this study.

With respect to future concerns, two documents that helped define the strategic context for the employment of the United States Army airborne, forced entry capability

are *Joint Vision 2010* and *Army Vision 2010*. Although *Army Vision 2010* in many cases simply reiterates *Joint Vision 2010* in a more service-oriented context, both documents paint a very vivid picture of the environment in which the United States military expects to find itself in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. Major General Robert H. Scales' work *Future Warfare* complements *Joint Vision 2010*, in that it provides detailed and substantial documentation on how the United States of America will go to war in the next century.

These three documents also form the basis for the examination and analysis of the threat facing the United States in the decades ahead. In addition to *Future Warfare*, *Joint Vision 2010*, and *Army Vision 2010*, three valuable resources on the future threat were the *Strategic Assessment, 1999*, published by the Institute for National Defense Studies at the National Defense University; the Congressional testimony on 24 May 1999 of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Lieutenant General Patrick M. Hughes; and an article, "Where is Warfare?" published by Professor Eliot Cohen, the Director of Strategic Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. These three sources provide detailed and descriptive analysis of the threat facing the United States in the twenty-first century, as well as providing a credible prediction of what the future of warfare holds for the United States in the decades ahead. Most importantly, they provide data that, when combined with the requirements embedded in *Joint Vision 2010* and *Army Vision 2010*, allow for forging a comprehensive link between strategic requirements and the capabilities required to neutralize the threat.

Martin van Creveld's *The Transformation of War* is the definitive contemporary work on the subject of warfare past, present, and future. Van Creveld details warfare

throughout the ages with what he calls a “non-Clausewitzian framework for thinking about war.”<sup>4</sup> Most importantly with relation to this research project, van Creveld provides significant insight and thought into the threat and warfare of the future, focusing on what the military implications of this future warfare may be.

Although the compilation of research material has shown that much historical data exists on the employment of airborne forces in battle, the research project indicates that very little effort over the last half century has been devoted to the larger issues of generalizations and extrapolations. This realization is a by-product of the research process and the thesis question. Not only does the research study endeavor to fill the gaps that historians have neglected, but more importantly, the project breaks new ground with its doctrinally oriented analysis of the data. The capabilities and limitations of airborne operations have been studied and analyzed and linked to the larger picture. It is only in part through this linkage that one can reasonably arrive at conclusions regarding the future optimal force structure for a large-scale conventional tactical airborne force as a component of United States national military strategy, now and into the twenty-first century.

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<sup>1</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, *82nd Airborne Division Pamphlet 600-2, The All American Standard* (Fort Bragg, NC: March 1996), B-8.

<sup>2</sup>Tom Clancy, *Airborne: A Guided Tour of an Airborne Task Force* (New York: Berkley Books, 1997), iv-vi.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, xv.

<sup>4</sup>Martin L. van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), ix.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The evolution of this research project arose from the author's fervent desire to determine whether there still exists a need for a United States Army airborne, forced entry capability at the division level in order to meet the national military strategic requirements of the twenty-first century. The problem and research question became much more timely and relevant when, on 12 October 1999, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Eric K. Shinseki, announced the Army's plan to design, within one year, the prototype for an Initial Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) capable of deploying anywhere in the world within ninety-six hours and winning in any mid-to-high-intensity conflict.<sup>1</sup> It followed from this announcement that as the Chief of Staff of the Army deemed a redesign of the heavy force necessary, a redesign of the Army's airborne, forced entry capable force was required, as well.

Preliminary research indicated that this question has not been examined in detail within the past twenty years. Thus, the impulse behind the research project attained still greater urgency. Preliminary research also indicated that the structure of the United States Army's airborne division had not changed significantly since initial development during the Second World War. Aside from obvious enhancements created by the modernization of equipment and technology over the past fifty years, the capabilities of the airborne division and the doctrine governing the employment of the capability itself have remained remarkably constant over time. As the senior leadership of the Army readies itself to embark on a redesign of its force structure to meet future strategic

challenges, the airborne division, too, finds itself the subject of intense scrutiny in light of future challenges.

Once the need to investigate the problem became apparent, the obvious first step was the determination of the primary and secondary research questions. This requirement for a rationale prompted the author to ask the question: Is there a requirement for an airborne, forced entry capability in the United States Army in the twenty-first century? Preliminary research and analysis in both historical records and strategic policy documents indicated that the answer to this question was simply, yes, there certainly existed a need for this requirement. Further examination confirmed this endeavor during the course of the research process.

Subsequent and more detailed research revealed the necessity to view airborne, forced entry capabilities in broad organizational and circumstantial context. Analysis came to encompass the equipment, structure, mission, doctrine, and strategic value of a United States Army forced entry capable division. For the analysis to be of any value to the Army and the Department of Defense, the research question must focus not only on the specific capabilities of the future United States Army airborne, forced entry capability at the division level, but also on this force's ability to meet the challenges posed by the future threat.

The issue of context meant that the research problem could not be studied in an organizational vacuum. Consequently, the Army Chief of Staff's call for modernization and the development of the Initial Brigade Combat Team logically implied that the conventional airborne, forced entry capability division of the United States Army (the 82nd Airborne Division) needed to be modernized as well. Because the structure,



capabilities, and mission of the 82nd Airborne Division had changed only incrementally since its first employment during the Second World War, the precise manner in which to approach the research question became the first challenge.

The nature of the subject matter and its evidentiary basis clearly indicated that the appropriate research method would involve qualitative analysis. This thesis combines all the elements of a classic qualitative study, as outlined by Elliot T. Eisner in his invaluable research manual, *The Enlightened Eye*. The study is unquestionably field focused, inherently interpretive in scope, particularly geared towards specifics and detail, and grounded in future utility.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the nature of the evidence, ranging from historical studies through combat experience and lessons learned to theory and personal testimony, emphatically places the research design in the realm of qualitative method. The research materials by their very nature do not lend themselves to empirical methods. A qualitative orientation enables this thesis to make use of all three categories of data that Michael Quinn Patton lays out in his research manual, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*: in-depth, open-ended interviews, direct observation, and written documents.<sup>3</sup> Although this research project did not actually entail "going into the field," which Patton views as a critical component of qualitative analysis,<sup>4</sup> the author's previous experience as a company commander in the 82nd Airborne Division and his understanding of airborne, forced entry operations through personal experience certainly satisfies the intent of this requirement. Finally, the sum of combat experiences serves as a surrogate (and very real) form of going into the field.

In order to provide accurate data to support the findings of the research and analysis, the author supports the final analysis with a detailed quantitative comparison of

the final force structure models. This was necessary in order to enhance the value and, especially, the objectivity of the study. First, the historical research yields four possible models of future force structure, all of which must initially meet a set of feasibility screening criteria. The author presents the four models and defines them in detail, combining the force structure of each with its primary and unique capabilities.

Second, the author presents and defines a detailed set of evaluation criteria with which to compare the force structure models. The evaluation criteria contain definitions extracted from either US Army field manuals or joint publications, thus strengthening their value as credible doctrinal arbiters. Furthermore, each evaluation criterion contains a weighted number value relative to its significance in the overall capability requirement, as defined by the historical research.

Finally, the author presents the quantitative analysis, multiplying the relative weight of the evaluation criteria against the percentage of the desired capability inherent in each of the respective force structure models. The result of the quantitative analysis, combined with the detailed qualitative analysis undertaken, serves to validate the conclusions of the research process.

Within the overall methodological framework, the most suitable research approach to best understand the problem and the questions it implied was one that combined all the elements of a qualitative analysis with the strengths of historical research, which itself remains one of the strongest variants of qualitative study. Once the author determined the research question, collection of data proceeded in accordance with the canons governing qualitative method. The primary research question dictated that all research materials flow from a consideration of three distinct areas: the history of the

airborne employment and capabilities; the existing and proposed doctrine governing the employment of the airborne, forced entry capability; and the strategic vision and future threat posture that dictated the future requirement for the capability at issue.

A detailed survey of relevant history resulted in more data than could ever be realistically used in a research project of limited scope. The problem became one of paring down the material, of determining what was relevant to the research question and solutions to that question as they exist today. Of necessity, the historical segment of the study focuses on those operations and employment of the airborne, forced entry capability that have occurred within the past twenty years. Limited emphasis on the historical dimension also provides valuable insight into the impulses behind change and continuity over extended periods of time, thus guarding against "snapshot" driven analyses of fundamental issues.

Within these parameters, historical materials included not only those works published independently or in professional and scholarly journals, but also unpublished oral histories and after action reports (AARs) detailing events and lessons learned as they actually occurred. Of all the research conducted for this thesis, these lessons learned proved to be the most valuable, and, contributed the greatest insights into the true utilization of the airborne, forced entry capability over the past twenty years.

A second large category of research involved an in depth examination of the current force structure, capabilities, and requirements of the airborne, forced entry capable force. This research centered on doctrine, beginning with an examination of the modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) for the 82nd Airborne Division. The author examined the standing operating procedures (SOPs) of the 82nd to determine

how its capabilities were employed in training and in combat. Next, these capabilities were juxtaposed with existing joint and United States Army doctrine as outlined in Joint Publication 3.0 and United States Army FMs 90-26, *Airborne Operations* and 7-30, *Infantry, Airborne, and Air Assault Brigade Operations* to determine whether the airborne, forced entry capability as now conceived corresponds with existing doctrine. Planned and proposed future doctrine, as stated by the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and the United States Army Infantry Center, the proponenty for airborne doctrine in the United States Army, was then studied and compared with the capabilities that these units currently possess. This comparison both served to fill the gap that exists between future requirements and current capabilities, and ultimately, to shape solutions and answers to the thesis and research question.

To place the problem in its strategic context, the current United States *National Security Strategy* (NSS) and *National Military Strategy* (NMS) were analyzed, along with *Joint Vision 2010* and *Army Vision 2010*. These documents both reflect and shape perceptions about the potential requirement for a large-scale conventional airborne, forced entry capable force, to include more generalized discussions of rapid deployment and strategic mobility. Research emphasis naturally fell on the threat analysis component of each document, because of the obvious necessity to link current and projected threat with the requirements for rapid deployment and strategic mobility.

The latter two issues automatically led to a consideration of the air dimension. An analysis of United States Air Force strategic airlift capability, as outlined in its SBA concept, became critical to determining United States Army airborne, forced entry requirements for the future. This doctrine was examined in order to determine not only

what size Army force the Air Force specifies it can actually deliver into an objective area today, but what the parameters of execution are likely to be in the twenty-first century.

Closely related to present and future joint capabilities is an analysis of the threat as embodied in likely United States national military strategy in the twenty-first century. This analysis drew upon projections in documents, such as *Joint Vision 2010* and *Army Vision 2010*, along with existing threat analysis documents published by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).

Focus fell on the threat in terms of anticipated technological capabilities, the possession of which might enable a specific threat to endanger United States national security interests in the twenty-first century. These threat capabilities included such technologies as antitank-guided missiles (ATGMs), night observation devices (NODs), surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), light armor vehicles, sniper weapons systems, and air transport systems. These threat capabilities were then charted and compared with projected airborne insertion, forced entry capabilities (as outlined in force development plans for the future). The rationale is to determine whether the projected capabilities are going to be able to combat the projected threat in the twenty-first century.

In light of analysis based on the historical, doctrinal, and operational data uncovered, the author contends that he has fashioned an authoritative answer to the research question: What will likely be the optimal structure of United States Army airborne, forced entry capability in light of future doctrinal and strategic requirements in the twenty-first century?

<sup>1</sup>General Eric K. Shinseki, speech at the forty-fifth annual meeting of the Association of the United States Army, Washington, DC, 12 October 1999.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Eisener, *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice* (New York: McMillan Publishing Co., 1991), 32-39.

<sup>3</sup>Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (Newbury Park, NY: Sage Publications, 1990), 10.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 46.

## CHAPTER 4

### HISTORY

Where is the Prince who can afford so to cover his country with troops for its defense, as that ten thousand men, descending from the clouds, might not, in many places, do an infinite amount of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them?<sup>1</sup>

Benjamin Franklin

The United States Army's airborne, forced entry capability has evolved significantly since Benjamin Franklin first envisioned legions of paratroopers dropping out of the sky in 1784. As early as the autumn of 1918, Colonel William "Billy" Mitchell advised General John Pershing, Commander of the American Expeditionary Force in France, to create a division of paratroopers. These airborne soldiers, 1,200 men from the First Infantry Division divided into ten-man squads, were to be delivered from Handley-Page bombers in order to liberate the besieged town of Metz.<sup>2</sup>

Though Mitchell's brainchild was postponed until it was rendered obsolete by the end of the First World War, the idea resurfaced in April 1940. The United States War Department and the Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, approved plans for the creation and training of a test platoon of airborne infantry, to be used in conjunction with preliminary plans for the invasion of Europe.<sup>3</sup> From the first successful jump made by members of First Lieutenant William T. Ryder's test platoon on 16 August 1940, to the activation of the first battalion of paratroopers, the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Battalion in April 1941, to the formation of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions on 15 August 1942, the United States developed a very robust and credible forced entry capability for employment throughout the remainder of the Second World War.<sup>4</sup>

Beginning with the airborne assault of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) into Sebkra, North Africa, on 9 November 1942 during OPERATION TORCH, the United States Army executed a total of twelve combat forced entry airborne operations during the Second World War. The most well known of these "jumps" were: Sicily on 9 July 1943; Normandy, France, on 6 June 1944; and Nijmegen, Holland, on 17 September 1944. Other notable examples included four airborne assaults by elements of the 503rd Regimental Combat Team into New Guinea in 1943 and Corregidor in 1945. The United States Army executed its final forced entry airborne operation of the Second World War on 24 March 1945, OPERATION VARSITY. In the largest single combat airborne operation in history, elements of the United States 17th and the British 6th Airborne Divisions seized drop zones on the east side of the Rhine River to block retreating German forces and sever their lines of communications.<sup>5</sup>

Although the United States Army was able to effectively utilize its forced entry capability in the Second World War, the continued effective use of this capability occurred more sparingly in subsequent conflicts. The United States conducted only two forced entry airborne operations during the Korean War. Due to its designation by the President as the strategic reserve in 1951, the 82nd Airborne Division was maintained en masse at Fort Bragg in the event of a Soviet thrust into Western Europe.<sup>6</sup>

Hence, both forced entry combat airborne operations in the Korean War were conducted by the 187th Regimental Combat Team (RCT). The first of these was conducted on 20 October 1950 by three battalions of the 187th RCT at Sukchon and Sunchon drop zones, located approximately twenty miles from Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea.<sup>7</sup> The overall strategic value of the airborne insertion was insignificant,



despite strategic surprise and the tactical success of the operation. The forced entry operation did, however, validate some of the most significant advances and improvements in airborne warfare made since the end of the Second World War. For the first time in history, heavy equipment in the form of trucks and 105mm howitzers were delivered to the battlefield by parachute assault.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, aircraft delivered over five hundred tons of ammunition, gasoline, water, and other supplies in order to sustain forces on the ground.<sup>9</sup> Elaborations on these tried-and-true methods were to become the basis for the standard practice of forced entry operations for the next fifty years.

The other forced entry airborne operation conducted during the Korean War occurred on 23 March 1951 when the 187th RCT, reinforced by two Ranger companies, jumped at Munsan-Ni to cut off the North Korean 19th Division.<sup>10</sup> Again, strategic surprise and tactical success were achieved. More significantly, the successful execution of these two Korean War-era forced entry operations resulted in the resurrection of the XVIIIth Airborne Corps (which had been deactivated at the end of the Second World War) and the search for a suitable replacement for the mainstay of tactical airlift at the time, the C-47. The development of the C-130, which still remains the workhorse of tactical airlift today, began shortly thereafter.<sup>11</sup>

Nearly thirty years would elapse before the United States once again exercised its forced entry option into a combat environment. From the end of the Korean War until the early 1980s, the 82nd Airborne Division underwent a series of reorganizations in personnel and equipment. In 1958, the 82nd was transformed in accordance with the United States Army's Pentomic system. The division reorganized into five "Airborne Battle Groups," a division artillery consisting of six artillery batteries, a division support

command, and separate units consisting of engineer and signal battalions, a ground cavalry troop, and an aviation lift company (fig. 1).<sup>12</sup>

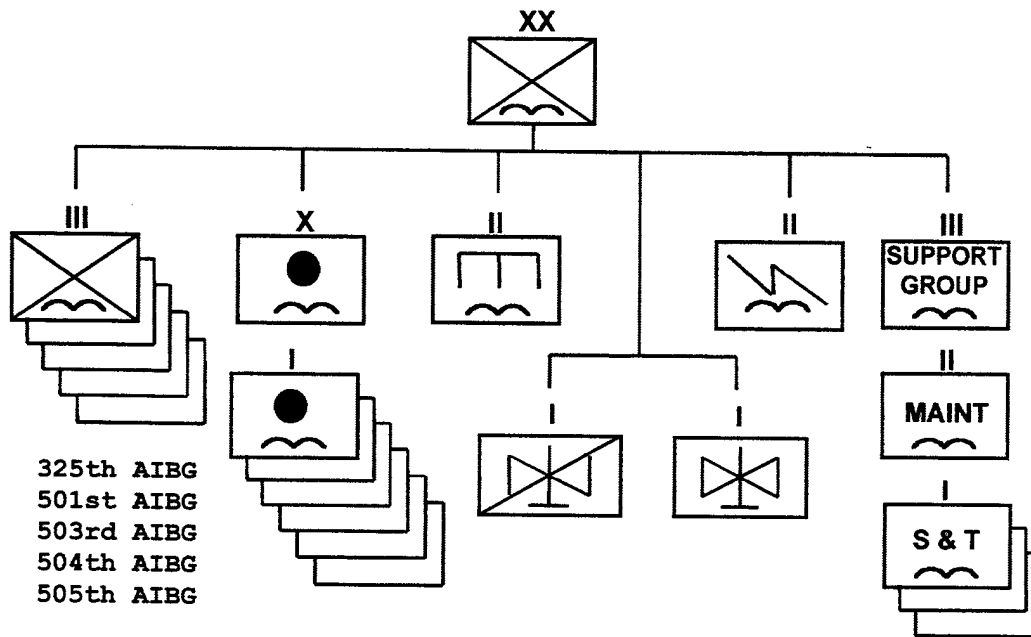


Fig. 1. Task Organization, 82nd Airborne Division, 1958. Source: Leroy Thompson, *The All-Americans: The 82nd Airborne Division* (Birmingham, England: David & Charles Publishers, 1988), 94-95.

The division maintained that configuration until 1964, when it was reorganized into its current configuration of three infantry brigades, each with three airborne infantry battalions; a division artillery, organized with three airborne field artillery battalions and equipped with 105mm towed howitzers; a division support command, consisting of a maintenance battalion, medical battalion, supply and transportation battalion, and an administrative company; and separate units consisting of a combat engineer battalion, aviation battalion (equipped with a company of UH-1 "Huey" helicopters and a company

of AH-1 "Cobra" attack helicopters), ground cavalry squadron, signal battalion, military intelligence company, and a military police company (fig. 2).<sup>13</sup>

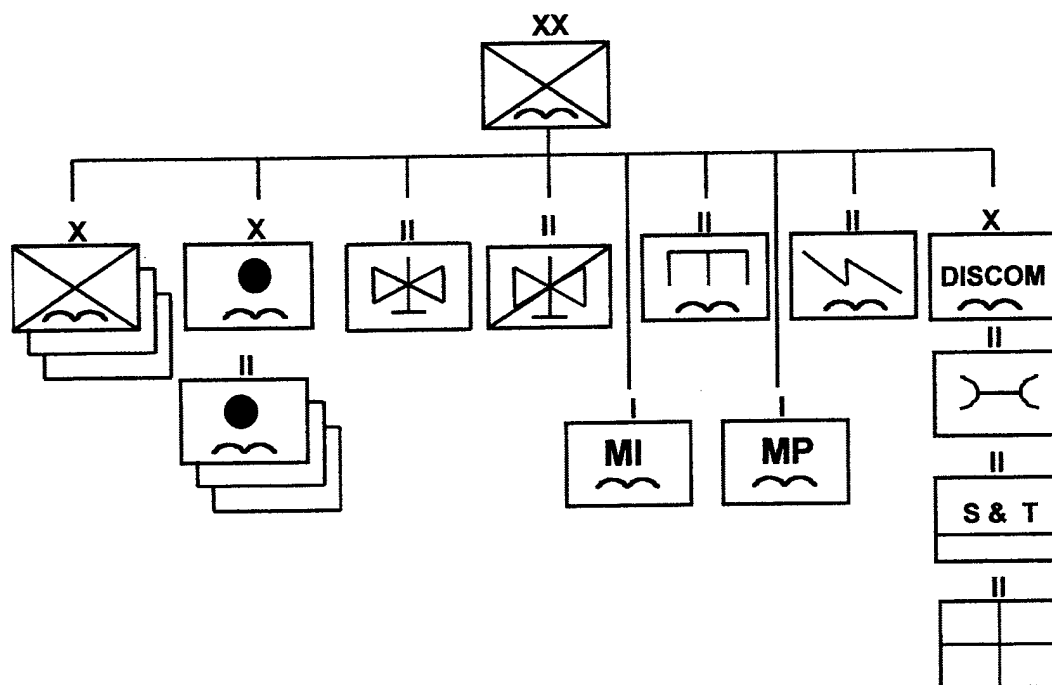


Fig. 2. Task Organization, 82nd Airborne Division, 1964. Source: Leroy Thompson, *The All-Americans: The 82nd Airborne Division* (Birmingham, England: David & Charles Publishers, 1988), 96-97.

The 82nd added two additional capabilities to its force structure in 1969. A light armor battalion, equipped with M551 Sheridan tanks, gave the division its first true anti-tank capability. An air defense artillery battalion, equipped with the lethal six-by-thirty millimeter "Vulcan," gave the division its first true air defense capability.<sup>14</sup>

Because the 82nd served as the United States strategic rapid deployment force, the division alerted for deployment various times in response to wartime contingency operations during the 1960s and 1970s. These included OPERATION POWERPACK,

the deployment to the Dominican Republic in April 1965 that restored peace and stability to the Caribbean island nation.<sup>15</sup> Events three years later saw the deployment of the 3rd Brigade of the 82nd to Vietnam from February 1968 to December 1969, in response to the TET Offensive.<sup>16</sup> The 82nd Airborne Division alerted for war time deployment three additional times during the 1970s: preparation for deployment during the Arab-Israeli War in the fall of 1973; deployment to restore peace in Zaire in May 1978; and, finally, in November 1979 when the division prepared for a possible rescue of American hostages held in Tehran, Iran.<sup>17</sup> Though the 82nd Airborne Division did not execute its forced entry airborne operations capability in combat throughout this period, the capabilities of the force continued to improve as new technology became available and United States Army tactical forced entry doctrine evolved.

The evolution of the 82nd Airborne Division's aviation capability during this period is also worthy of discussion. As previously noted, the 1964 reorganization of the division included an aviation battalion equipped with UH-1s for lift and AH-1s for attack purposes. A support package of aviation, consisting of both lift and attack assets, deployed with the 3rd Brigade to Vietnam in 1968.<sup>18</sup> In 1972, the 1-17th Cavalry Squadron was redesignated as an air cavalry squadron, and equipped with one air cavalry troop (armed with AH-1 Cobras). Subsequently, the squadron reorganized again in 1972, and transitioned from three ground/one air troop to one ground/three air troop configuration, again armed with Cobra attack helicopters.<sup>19</sup>

The first truly forced entry combat airborne operation conducted since the Korean War occurred on 25 October 1983, when two battalions of United States Army Rangers jumped into the tiny island nation of Grenada as a part of OPERATION URGENT

FURY.<sup>20</sup> Four battalions of airborne infantry from the 82nd Airborne Division were rigged for parachute assault and were to conduct their own forced entry airborne assault in conjunction with that of the Rangers. However, these units landed instead six hours later on the airfield seized by the Rangers. In his chapter on Grenada in *Americans at War*, Dan Bolger does not argue definitively that the operational objectives for URGENT FURY would have been better served had the battalions of the 82nd conducted a parachute assault rather than airlanding behind the Rangers.<sup>21</sup> Subsequent training exercises by the 82nd Airborne Division have shown this to be the case however. Both 82nd Airborne Division warfighting doctrine as well as the Air Force's Strategic Brigade Airdrop doctrine clearly point out that the division can deliver nine infantry battalions and both the division and corps assault command posts through parachute assault in twenty-nine hours, while the division can only deliver three infantry battalions and the brigade assault command post through airland operations during the same time period.<sup>22</sup>

Following the operations in Grenada, the 82nd Aviation Brigade underwent further reorganization. First, in 1986 both the division lift and attack helicopter companies were increased to battalion-sized units. Then, in 1988 the division transitioned from UH-1 "Hueys" to UH-60 "Blackhawks" for lift and AH-1 "Cobras" to AH-64 "Apaches" for attack.<sup>23</sup>

Following extensive planning and preparation, the United States conducted its most recent truly large-scale forced entry airborne assault into Panama on 20 December 1989 during OPERATION JUST CAUSE. Two battalions of Rangers and an entire reinforced Brigade Task Force from the 82nd Airborne Division, over 2,000-men strong, overwhelmed opposition from the Panamanian Defense Force to subdue the entire

country overnight and depose the ruling dictator of Panama, Manuel Noriega. Similar to the initial forced entry planned during the operation in Grenada, the airborne battalions of the 82nd Airborne Division followed the Ranger battalions onto their drop zones, but then moved independently to seize multiple assault objectives throughout the area of operations.

Again executing its role as the nation's strategic rapid deployment force, combat units from the 82nd Airborne Division were the very first ground elements deployed in Saudi Arabia in August 1990 for OPERATION DESERT SHIELD. Although the division did not conduct a forced entry operation, the readiness and rapid deployability of the 82nd Airborne Division assured that the United States had forces on the ground in Saudi Arabia in less than twenty-four hours after ordered to deploy by the President of the United States, George A. Bush.<sup>24</sup> The 82nd Airborne Division remained in Saudi Arabia until February 1991, when it deployed into Iraq as a part of OPERATION DESERT STORM, albeit again not in a forced entry role.

Following redeployment from DESERT STORM, the Aviation Brigade reorganized once again. Deeming the AH-64 too bulky to move with the division in a no-notice, contingency operation, the division replaced the AH-64s in its attack aviation battalion with the lighter and easier deployable OH-58D "Kiowa Warrior."<sup>25</sup>

The 82nd Airborne Division next displayed its rapid deployment, forced entry capability in September 1994 when the United States intervened in Haiti during OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. Through an extensive training, preparation, and rehearsal program, the 82nd Airborne Division was alerted to execute the largest forced entry combat airborne assault since OPERATION VARSITY across the Rhine

River in March 1945. Nearly 4000 paratroopers were rigged for parachute assault and prepared to jump into two different drop zones in Haiti. Although eleventh-hour negotiations succeeded and the invasion was called off, the United States Army and Air Force proved that they could transport nearly 4000 paratroopers into a forced entry combat environment utilizing a combination of sixty C-130s and forty-three C-141 transports.<sup>26</sup> Ultimately, and most importantly, it was the knowledge that the airborne armada was inbound to Haiti that caused the dictator, Raoul Cedras, to capitulate and accede to the demands of the international community. The 82nd Airborne Division After Action Report (AAR) from the operation emphasizes this in stating: "The 82d proved to be the strategic lever which forced Haitian leaders to concede and accept the alternative of a permissive entry by U.S. forces."<sup>27</sup>

Incredibly enough, following the aborted Haiti operation the division executed a significant search to find a replacement for its aging fleet of M551 Sheridan tanks. The replacement chosen in February 1996, the Armored Gun System, or AGS, armed with an improved 105mm main gun, was projected to replace the M551 in December 1998. However, funding constraints and political considerations weighed in, and instead of replacing the M551, the Chief of Staff of the Army chose instead to cancel the AGS project and deactivate the light armor battalion.<sup>28</sup> This step, combined with the loss of the AH-64 following DESERT STORM, left the 82nd Airborne Division with no significant anti-armor capability outside of the TOW weapons systems organic to the infantry battalions.

The foregoing discussion underscores the fact that the basic doctrine governing the tactical employment of the Army's airborne, forced entry capability has not changed

significantly during the past fifty years. The incremental evolution of capabilities combined with enhancements in technology has kept the 82nd Airborne Division a strategic rapid deployment force capable of executing combat operations anywhere in the world. Nowhere was this more evident than on 15 September of 1997, when a battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division executed a forced entry airborne training operation in Kazakhstan, flying non-stop nearly 8000 miles from Pope Air Force Base (AFB), North Carolina and refueling three times en route to the objective. General John J. Sheehan, the Commanding General, United States Atlantic Command, himself participating in the operation, made a statement from the drop zone in Shymkent, Khazakstan, stating simply,

We can send the 82nd Airborne anywhere we want, at any time, and there's not much you can do about it. So, if you are thinking about creating a problem, be careful because I can ruin your day. There is not one nation on the face of the earth we can't get to.<sup>29</sup>

The future of large-scale, forced entry airborne operations is shrouded in the unknown. Given the sparing employment of the 82nd Airborne Division during the course of the past fifty years, the airborne capability must be studied in detail to determine whether this capability, along with the requirement, remain viable. Analysis of current doctrine, requirements, capabilities, technologies, and threats will determine whether the United States needs to maintain the current capability, and what shape that capability will take in the twenty-first century in order to best serve the national security interests of the United States.

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 69.



<sup>2</sup>William Mitchell, *Memoirs of World War I* (New York: Random House, 1930), 267-268.

<sup>3</sup>Edwin P. Hoyt, *Airborne: The History of American Parachute Forces* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), 14.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 14-17.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 145-147.

<sup>6</sup>Leroy Thompson, *The All Americans: The 82nd Airborne* (Birmingham, England: David & Charles Publishers, 1988), 93.

<sup>7</sup>Charles Abecrombie and Don Allen, "The Battle of Sukchon Sonchon," SAMS Monograph, Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1984, vii.

<sup>8</sup>The seventy-five millimeter howitzers, "pack guns" as they were called then, had been delivered via parachute into Sicily, Normandy and Nijmegen during the Second World War. Larger guns and vehicles were delivered to the drop zone inside gliders.

<sup>9</sup>USAF Historical Liaison Office, *USAF Airborne Operation: World War II and Korean War* (Washington, DC: US Air University, March 1962), 103.

<sup>10</sup>Abercrombie and Allen, 78.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup>Thompson, 94-95.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 96-97.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 99-100.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 111-113.

<sup>19</sup>Eighty Second Aviation Brigade, "82nd Aviation Brigade History" (Fort Bragg, NC: 10 January 2000), 2.

<sup>20</sup>Daniel P. Bolger, *Americans at War* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988), 305-310.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 345-351.

<sup>22</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1999), 10.

<sup>23</sup>"82nd Aviation Brigade History," 3.

<sup>24</sup>Bob Woodward, *The Commanders* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), 479.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, *After Action Report: OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY* (Fort Bragg, NC: 20 May 1995), 1.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>28</sup>"Army Trades Off AGS System for Cash," *The Army Times* (5 February 1996), 3.

<sup>29</sup>John S. Newton, "Soldiers Start Mission with Historic Drop," *The Fayetteville Observer Times*, 16 September 1997, 1-2.

## CHAPTER 5

### LIKELY EMPLOYMENT SCENARIOS

Analysis of the problem with its focused research question must begin with a detailed understanding of the task organization, capabilities, and mission requirements of the contemporary model of the 82nd Airborne Division. The current capabilities and mission requirements are then juxtaposed against the projected threat of the future. The results are scenarios the 82nd Airborne Division will most likely be employed against in the twenty-first century.

Currently, the 82nd Airborne Division is comprised of three airborne infantry brigades, each consisting of a brigade headquarters and three airborne infantry battalions; an airborne artillery brigade (DIVARTY), consisting of a headquarters service battery and three airborne field artillery battalions; an aviation brigade, consisting of a headquarters company, an attack aviation battalion equipped with twenty-four OH-58D "Kiowa Warriors," an assault aviation battalion equipped with forty-three UH-60D "Blackhawks," and an air cavalry squadron equipped with twenty-four Kiowa Warriors; an airborne division support command or DISCOM, comprised of a main support battalion and three forward support battalions; an airborne engineer battalion, consisting of three direct support engineer companies and a general support company; an airborne military intelligence battalion; an airborne air defense artillery battalion; a military police company; and a chemical company.<sup>1</sup> Figure 3 depicts the task organization and major weapons systems currently found in the 82nd Airborne Division.

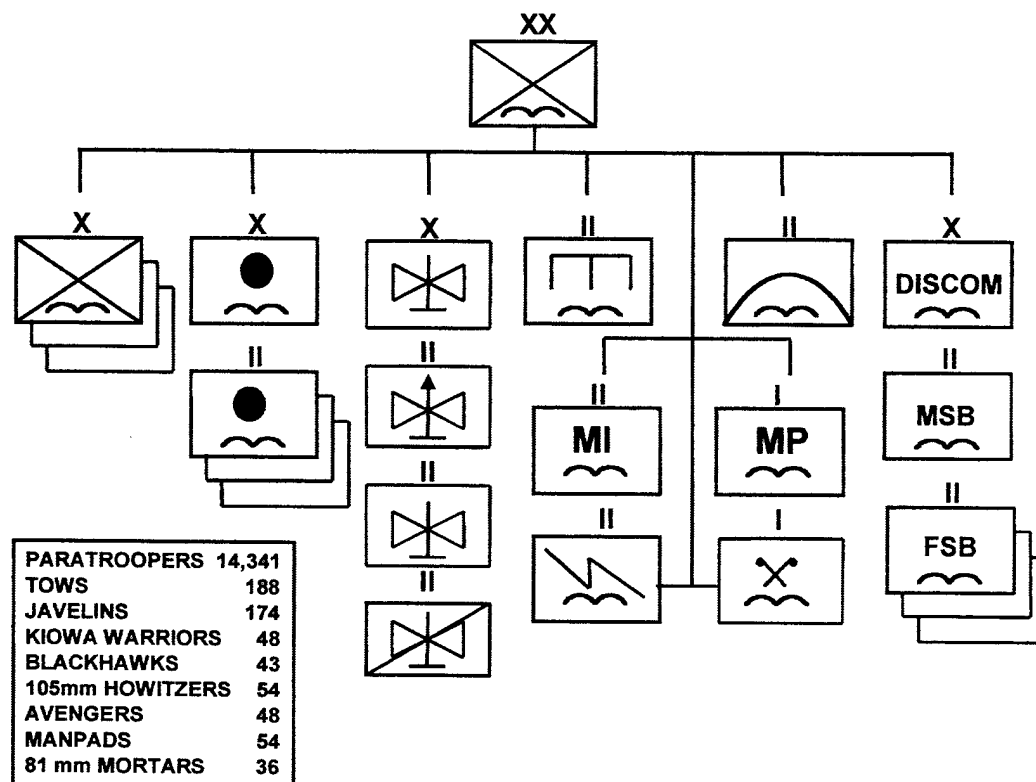


Fig. 3. Task Organization, 82nd Airborne Division, 2000. Source: Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 6-7.

The airborne infantry brigade combat team, always combat ready, is the cornerstone of the 82nd Airborne Division's forced entry capability. The airborne infantry brigade combat team is comprised of a headquarters company, three airborne infantry battalions, a direct support airborne field artillery battalion, a direct support engineer company, a direct support air defense artillery battery, an aviation task force, direct support military intelligence company, a military police platoon, a chemical platoon, and a direct support forward support battalion.<sup>2</sup> Only the headquarters company and infantry battalions are organic to the infantry brigade (Fig. 4).

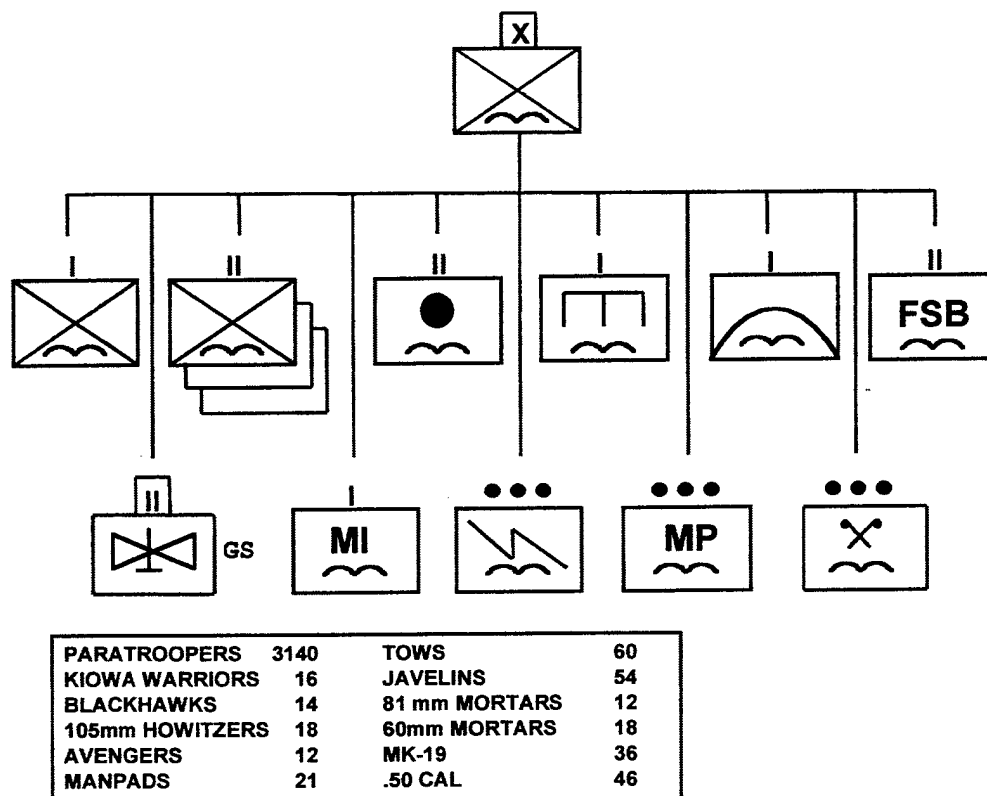


Fig. 4. Task Organization, Airborne Infantry Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, 2000.  
Source: Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 8-9.

The focal point of the airborne infantry brigade combat team is the airborne infantry battalion task force. This organization is comprised of a headquarters company, equipped with a mortar platoon (four by eighty-one millimeter), a scout platoon, and a medical platoon; three airborne infantry rifle companies, each consisting of three airborne infantry rifle platoons and a mortar section (two by sixty millimeter); an airborne anti-tank company, equipped with twenty TOW-II weapons systems, ten fifty caliber machine guns, and ten MK-19 forty millimeter grenade launchers; a direct support field artillery battery, containing six 105mm M119 howitzers; a direct support engineer

platoon; and a direct support air defense artillery platoon, armed with four Avengers and seven Man-Portable Air Defense Stinger Systems (MANPADS) (Fig. 5).<sup>3</sup>

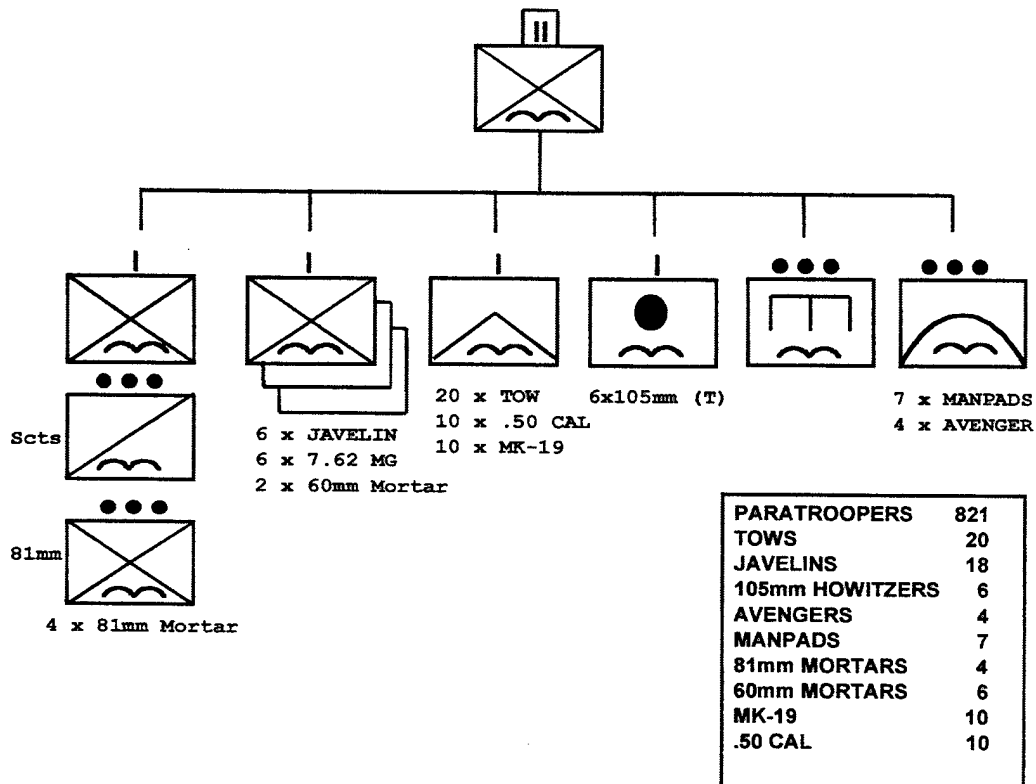


Fig. 5. Task Organization, Airborne Infantry Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, 2000. Source: Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 10-11.

Based on this task organization, the primary mission of the 82nd Airborne Division, as defined in its mission statement, is: "Within eighteen hours of notification, the 82nd Airborne Division strategically deploys, conducts forcible entry parachute assault, and secures key objectives for follow-on military operations in support of United States national interests."<sup>4</sup> The 82nd Airborne Division trains to maintain its combat readiness and capabilities in the following mission sets:<sup>5</sup>

1. Alert, marshal, and deploy anywhere in the world within eighteen hours of notification

2. Conduct forced entry airborne assault

3. Seize an airfield

4. Secure a lodgment

5. Conduct offensive operations

6. Sustain combat operations

7. Command and control (C2) the division

8. Protect the force

Currently, the 82nd Airborne Division addresses its combat readiness and ability to successfully execute these missions by rotating its subordinate maneuver brigades through mission readiness, training support, and mission support cycles. Centered on the division's three infantry brigade combat teams, the mission-training-support cycles rotate among the three infantry brigades every ninety days.

During each ninety-day period, the infantry brigades with their habitual combat, combat support, and combat service support slice elements are designated as the Division Ready Brigade (DRB) One, Two, or Three. The DRB One is designated the Mission Brigade, the DRB Two is designated the Training Brigade, and the DRB Three is designated the Mission Support Brigade. Within the three DRBs, each infantry battalion task force maintains a time-constrained level of readiness, based upon its individual requirement to have the battalion prepared to load aircraft en route to a designated objective area (Table 1).<sup>6</sup>

Table 1. 82nd Airborne Division Readiness Cycles

DRB	DRF	READINESS AREA	RECALL STATUS	WHEELS UP
DRB 1	DRF 1	Mission Prep	2 Hours	N+18 Hours
	DRF 2	Mission Prep	4 Hours	N+24 Hours
	DRF 3	Mission Prep	6 Hours	N+24 Hours
DRB 2	DRF 4	Training	12 Hours	N+36 Hours
	DRF 5	Training	12 Hours	N+36 Hours
	DRF 6	Training	12 Hours	N+36 Hours
DRB 3	DRF 7	Post Support	24 Hours	N+48 Hours
	DRF 8	Post Support	24 Hours	N+48 Hours
	DRF 9	Mission Support	2 Hours	N+48 Hours

This cycle of rotation allows the division to maintain its training focus while ensuring that an entire DRB is ready to deploy to combat at a moment's notice. It also allows the division to maintain its combat readiness when one battalion or even an entire DRB is already deployed. Most importantly, this cycle ensures that a brigade combat team is always ready for employment to any contingency in the world, without requiring additional train-up prior to deployment.<sup>7</sup>

Historical data indicates that the 82nd Airborne Division is capable of executing its prescribed mission and mission set. First, the Division's actions during OPERATION JUST CAUSE in December 1989, in which two infantry battalions from the 1st Brigade Combat Team conducted a forced entry combat airborne operations to seize key



objectives in Panama, proved that the 82nd Airborne Division could, with no prior warning, alert, marshal, and deploy to conduct decisive combat operations.

Second, the 82nd Airborne Division's preparation for and near execution of OPERATION RESTORE DEMOCRACY in September 1994, in which all three brigade combat teams were armed and loaded aboard C-130 and C-141 transports, proved that not just one brigade, but the entire division was capable of deploying on short notice to execute decisive combat operations. As the Commanding General of the 82nd, Major General William M. Steele, said in a letter to the division following the aborted mission:

The plan called for the All Americans to spearhead the mission by conducting our largest combat parachute assault since Operation Market Garden in World War II. We launched the first wave of 60 C-130 aircraft while political negotiations were still in progress in Port au Prince. Reports indicate that the commitment of the 82d Airborne Division was the catalyst for a peaceful return of democracy to Haiti. We accomplished our mission without casualties on either side.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, the division's September 1997 exercise in Kazakhstan, in which an airborne battalion executed a forced entry operation in a foreign country after flying 8,000 miles for twenty hours without landing to refuel, proved that the division's strategic reach across the globe is unrivaled.<sup>9</sup>

Some will argue that one possible option for executing the mission assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division is already available in the form of the Maritime Amphibious Ready Group (MARG)/Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU)/ Special Operations Capable (SOC). The MEU(SOC), with a strength of about 2,200 personnel is normally built around an infantry battalion reinforced with artillery, armor, engineer, and amphibian assault units; a composite aircraft squadron consisting of attack, transport, and utility helicopters, and fixed-wing attack jet aircraft; and a MEU service support group.<sup>10</sup>

Commanded by a colonel, the MEU(SOC) is employed to fulfill routine forward deployments with Naval fleets in the Mediterranean, the Western Pacific, and the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The MEU(SOC) is deployed aboard three Naval amphibious ships, which make the entire package the MARG.<sup>11</sup>

In its own doctrinal description of the mission and limitations of the MEU(SOC), the Marine Corps says that

The MEU(SOC) mission is to provide the NCA and the combatant commanders with a forward deployed, sea-based, rapid crisis response capability to execute a full range of military operations. It is organized, trained, and equipped as a self-sustaining, general-purpose expeditionary Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) that possesses the capability to conduct operations across the spectrum of conflict, from military operations other than war, to amphibious and other conventional operations in support of various contingency requirements.<sup>12</sup>

The MEU is a very capable unit, but its limitations as a strategic offensive capability make it unable to accomplish the missions required of the 82nd Airborne Division. First, the major ground component of the MEU is a reinforced infantry battalion, equipped with six Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs), a battery of six 155mm towed howitzers, and, frequently, a platoon of M1A3 tanks (four tanks).<sup>13</sup> Though backed by a squadron of six AV-8B "Harrier" attack aircraft and eight AH-1B "Cobra" attack helicopters, the MEU does not possess nearly the firepower of a DRB from the 82nd, nor does it possess a force large enough to seize and hold decisive terrain. Most significantly, though as a sea-based asset the MEU is forwardly deployed and can get to most contingency areas quickly, it is also limited to the littoral regions of the world, and thus does not possess the same strategic, long-range reach that the 82nd does.

The question that one must ask when examining the 82nd Airborne Division's predetermined mission set is: What are the likely scenarios into which the 82nd Airborne

Division will most likely be employed in the future? Will the 82nd Airborne Division be employed in a deterrent, "trip-wire" type environment, such as in OPERATION DESERT SHIELD, where the strategic mobility of the division allowed the National Command Authority to deploy the force quickly prior to the arrival of larger, more lethal and sustainable forces? Or will the division be utilized as a massive cudgel, such as it was in OPERATION JUST CAUSE and OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, in which the shock effect nature of its employment was able to quickly defeat one enemy (Panama) and cause the other to capitulate (Haiti) rather than fight?<sup>14</sup>

The answer to these questions must take into consideration both the capabilities required by the 82nd to defeat its opponent in battle, as well as the characteristics of the specific enemy forces. A significant loss of capability that distinguishes the 82nd Airborne Division of OPERATION JUST CAUSE in 1989 and OPERATION RESTORE DEMOCRACY in 1994 from the 82nd Airborne Division of 2000 is the absence from the latter of both AH-64 "Apache" attack helicopters and an airborne light armor battalion. Apache helicopters were first introduced into the 82nd Airborne Division in 1988, when the 1st Battalion (Attack), 82nd Aviation Brigade transitioned from the AH-1H "Cobra" to the Apache.<sup>15</sup> The Apaches of the 1-82nd first saw combat duty during OPERATION JUST CAUSE, when it was the first Apache-equipped attack aviation battalion to deploy into combat.<sup>16</sup> The attack battalion was again deployed to Saudi Arabia in August 1990, where, as the first Apache-equipped unit in the joint area of operations, it helped to draw President Bush's "Line in the Sand."<sup>17</sup>

But Apaches cannot be transported inside C-130 or C-141 transports without being completely dismantled (they require a C-5 or C-17).<sup>18</sup> In 1992, in an attempt to

enhance its own strategic mobility, the 82nd Airborne Division traded all its AH-64 Apaches for the smaller and more readily transportable OH-58D "Kiowa Warrior."<sup>19</sup>

Though the C-141 can transport two Kiowa Warriors, the aircraft is both significantly slower as well as much more lightly armed than the Apache. The Apache's cruising speed is 140 knots, compared to ninety knots for the Kiowa Warrior.<sup>20</sup> The Kiowa Warrior is armed with only four Hellfire or Stinger air-to-air missiles, fourteen 2.75" rockets, and a .50 caliber machine gun, while the Apache is armed with up to sixteen Hellfire missiles, up to thirty-eight 2.75" rockets, and a thirty millimeter cannon.<sup>21</sup> The extended speed and enhanced firepower of the Apache made it far superior to the Kiowa Warrior, and gave the 82nd Airborne Division a lethal, long-range tank-killing capability that it currently lacks with only the Kiowa Warrior. Without the Apache attack helicopter, the 82nd Airborne Division of 2000 has a dramatically less lethal armor killing capability than it possessed in 1990.

Another significant loss in capability occurred in July 1996, when the division's organic airborne light armor battalion was deactivated and removed from the MTOE. The armor battalion was equipped with fifty-four M551 Sheridan tanks, each armed with the lethal 152mm Shillelagh antitank missile.<sup>22</sup> More significantly, at the time the armor battalion was deactivated, there was a plan to replace the antiquated and costly-to-maintain Sheridans with the newly designed M8 Armored Gun System (AGS), a light armored vehicle equipped with a 105mm main gun. The addition of the 105mm main gun would have enabled the light armor battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division to engage and destroy most enemy armor encountered up to the T-72 tank, and its armor plating would have made it survivable on the modern battlefield.<sup>23</sup> The loss of the armor

battalion, compounded by the added loss of the AGS, significantly decreased the lethality and armor-killing capability of the current 82nd Airborne Division compared to its precursor in 1990.

### The Threat of the Future

More than MTWs is the possibility that the United States will be confronted by a series of lesser crises and small-scale contingency (SSC) operations. Since the end of the Cold War, these lesser, but by no means strategically insignificant, military operations have unfolded in such diverse places as Panama, Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo with remarkable regularity. Many future operations will likely occur in areas where the United States does not have permanently stationed forces, equipment or infrastructure. Many of these future expeditionary operations will confront well-armed local forces, entrenched in adverse military environments such as forests, mountains, jungles and cities. These situations point to the need for air-transportable ground forces that have substantial tactical mobility, protection and firepower--unlike current light infantry and special operations forces.<sup>24</sup>

In order to determine the best employment the 82nd Airborne Division, an in-depth understanding of the potential threat to the United States in the twenty-first century is required. The analysis of the threat to United States national strategic interests in the twenty-first century focuses on three critical areas: (1) the composition and characteristics of the threat; (2) the demographics of the threat, to include the most likely areas of concern for the United States military; and (3) the nature of future warfare and the most likely employment scenarios for the United States in war during the twenty-first century.

The most definitive open-source threat analysis to date is found in the *Strategic Assessment 1999* published by the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. In this assessment, the threat is broken down into four key components: transition states, those large nations that are regionally influential but have

the potential to be global powers, such as Russia, China, and India; rogue states, those nations which are the primary cause of conflict in the world today, and have the capability to remain so in the future, such as Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia; troubled states, those nations in which US involvement is generally humanitarian and not necessarily based on strategic national interest, such as Bosnia, Rwanda, Nigeria, and Kosovo; and transnational actors, those threats that cross international boundaries and pose a threat to United States national interests through terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, and refugee flow.<sup>25</sup> Significant to the potential deployment of the 82nd Airborne Division is the conclusion that:

Smaller wars waged at the lower end of the spectrum are already important and likely will become more so. . . . Such conflicts may be marked by bad weather, inhospitable terrain, and many small engagements in towns and urban areas, where information warfare, sensors, and smart munitions cannot be employed to full advantage.<sup>26</sup>

The study goes on to further surmise that future conflicts will be characterized by adversaries who attempt to win quickly, “before US forces can converge on the scene, or by dispersing their forces in rugged terrain to reduce their vulnerability.”<sup>27</sup> To combat a future threat operating in accordance with this paradigm, the United States must maintain a force that can deploy anywhere in the world on short notice, enter the theater of operations under non-permissive conditions, and bring to bear sufficient combat power to defeat any threat it may encounter.

In his article “Where is Warfare,” Professor Eliot Cohen goes one step further in his own analysis of the threat, presenting a credible model of the face of warfare in the twenty-first century. Professor Cohen states that warfare has undergone a significant facelift since the “mass army” battles of the First and Second World Wars mainly due to

the exponential enhancement of technology in the realm of electronics and weaponry. This enhancement of technology, and the ease with which technological improvements are made available to anyone who is willing to pay for them, has resulted in a new form of warfare, one that Cohen terms the "termite war:"

It is the murky war of the guerrilla and terrorist, the kind waged with such success by men as different as the Taliban, the Irish Republican Army, Hizbullah, and Somali warlords. It is the kind of war that RMA militaries abhor, because their technical advantage appears far less useful against such opponents than against the plodding armies of traditional mass warfare states, and because in such wars a trickle of casualties is unavoidable.<sup>28</sup>

Cohen further predicts that the potential and frequency of "termite war" in the twenty-first century will continue to grow, as "the spread of some very simple technologies (very effective high explosives, cheap automatic weapons and antitank or antiaircraft missiles) combines with the upgrade of communications and the ease of international travel."<sup>29</sup>

Cohen's theory on future warfare and the promulgation of the "termites" in future warfare is supported in *The Transformation of War*, historian Martin van Creveld's preeminent contemporary study on warfare. Van Creveld provides Cohen's termites with a new name, labeling them "bandits," "robbers," and "pirates."<sup>30</sup> They clearly point to the same antagonist in the new form of warfare they both predict for the future.

Van Creveld postulates that the world has seen the end of conventional warfare as we know it; unconventional war and low-intensity conflict (LIC), he predicts, are the wave of the future.<sup>31</sup> He says that the distinction between the "front" and the "rear" in battle has all but disappeared, and he defines LIC as warfare dominated by three overarching principles. First, LIC occurs in the "less developed" parts of the world. Second, LIC does not involve "regular" armies on both sides, rather, it is normally fought between

regulars on one side and guerrillas or terrorists on the other. Finally, LIC does not rely primarily on the “high-technology” weapons that are the major advantage of the modern armed forces of the world.<sup>32</sup> Making an unspoken case for the validity and utility of the 82nd Airborne Division, van Creveld concludes his study by stating that

The need to concentrate the greatest possible force and deliver the smashing blow at the decisive point will continue to clash with the need to outwit, mislead, deceive, and surprise the enemy. Victory, as always, will go to the side that best understands how to balance these two contradictory requirements, not just in the abstract but at a specific time, at a specific place, and against a specific enemy.<sup>33</sup>

As the 82nd Airborne Division is capable of forced entry combat operations, and is capable of deploying to any region in the world, the capabilities provided by the 82nd are ideally suited to combat the threat projected by Cohen and van Creveld. Specifically, the 82nd provides the perfect mix of capabilities to deter the threat in low intensity conflict, as defined by van Creveld in *The Transformation of War*.

Thus, as shown below in figure 6, the employment of the 82nd is most appropriate in the lower end of the spectrum of combat operations. The 82nd is perfectly suited for operating in the LIC arena, or in the SSC operations that have dominated the last decade of the twentieth century--and which will surely continue in the decade ahead. The 82nd Airborne Division's ability to deploy quickly into a non-permissive environment will ensure that the United States is able to achieve both strategic and tactical surprise wherever and whenever its national interests are threatened across the globe. Its ability to sustain itself, protect itself, and project lethal firepower into an austere environment anywhere in the world make it for the force of choice for dealing in the lower end of the operational warfighting spectrum.



RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS			
Military Operations		General US Goals	Representative Examples
COMBAT	War	Fight & Win	<u>Large Scale Combat Operations</u> <u>Attack/ Defend/ Blockade</u>
	NONCOMBAT	Deter War & Resolve Conflict	Peace Enforcement Counterterrorism Show of Force/Raid/Strike Peacekeeping/NEO Nation Assistance Counterinsurgency
		Promote Peace & Support US Civil Authorities	Freedom of Navigation Counterdrug Humanitarian Assistance Protection of Shipping US Civil Support

Fig. 6. Range of Military Operations. Source: Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1 February 1995), I-2.

The 82nd Airborne Division, or a variation thereof, is also ideally suited for employment in the operational arena. The Airborne Battalion Combat Team (ABCT) in Vicenza, Italy, part of the United States Army Southern European Task Force (USASETAF), is a perfect example of this. The ABCT serves as the United States European Command (USEUCOM) theater reserve and as the Commander-in-Chief (CINC)'s rapid reaction force. Much like the 82nd, the ABCT maintains a high state of readiness at all times, keeping one reinforced airborne rifle company team on a two-hour alert status for potential deployment as the CINC's theater Quick Reaction Force (QRF).<sup>34</sup>

As a model for theater operational employment, the ABCT has deployed in support of EUCOM contingencies on many occasions in the past decade. Most notable among these operational deployments include deployment to Rwanda in August 1995 during OPERATION SUPPORT HOPE; deployment to Liberia in April 1996 to conduct a Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) during OPERATION ASSURED RESPONSE; and as the first United States armed force in Bosnia-Herzegovina during OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR in December 1995.<sup>35</sup> The capabilities possessed by the ABCT are ideal for use by a theater CINC, and can be replicated by the deployment of a DRB or DRF of the 82nd into any operational area.

What is also evident in studying both the required capabilities of the 82nd Airborne Division and the threat of the future, is that the 82nd is much less viable in the higher end of the combat spectrum, such as high intensity conflict and Major Theater War (MTW). Van Creveld, Cohen and the authors of *Strategic Assessment 1999* reflect views which emphasize the unlikelihood that the 82nd Airborne Division will ever be employed again in a MTW, the role that it executed during OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/STORM. As John Gordon IV says in his study on the Army's ongoing medium weight force structure initiative (the Initial Brigade Combat Team):

The deployment of the 82nd Airborne Division as a "speed bump" during the first six weeks of Operation Desert Shield was certainly a high-risk situation. Had several Iraqi armored and mechanized divisions advanced into northern Saudi Arabia, the lead brigades of the 82nd would have lacked the firepower and protection to stand and fight a protracted battle; there would have been insufficient tactical mobility to easily disengage and withdraw if the battle had gone badly.<sup>36</sup>

Major General Edward Anderson, Director, J7, Operational Plans and Interoperability, the Joint Staff, confirmed this in a statement in which he said that the 82nd would never

be deployed into a situation in which they did not have the means to defend themselves or accomplish their mission.<sup>37</sup>

That the 82nd is ideally suited for combat at the lower end of the operational spectrum does not preclude the need for, and potential employment of, the 82nd to be prepared to fight at the higher end of the spectrum. In fact, in an era when mechanized and armored vehicles are proliferating around the world at an alarming rate and are easily obtainable on the open arms market, the need for a substantial anti-armor capability is paramount. Both the Rogue States and Troubled States discussed in *Strategic Assessment 1999* are well-equipped with armored vehicles that will certainly find their way into any low-intensity conflict the United States becomes involved in throughout the next century.<sup>38</sup>

The ability of the 82nd to deploy quickly with overwhelming combat power, prepared for and equipped to defeat the threat at every level short of MTW, is then significant to any discussion of the future force structure of the 82nd Airborne Division. The planned 82nd invasion of Haiti in September 1994 called for the employment of a company of M551 Sheridan tanks (fourteen vehicles), despite the fact that the entire Haitian defense force possessed less than fifteen viable armored vehicles.<sup>39</sup> The reason given for this use of armored vehicles in a predominantly light-infantry conflict were sound: the division required the ability to resoundingly defeat any armored threat it encountered, and the Sheridan company provided the division with that capability.<sup>40</sup> The rallying cry of the armored forces intended for airborne employment to Haiti was "The only tank in Haiti is the biggest tank in Haiti."<sup>41</sup>

The events surrounding the deaths of eighteen US soldiers in Somalia in October 1993 also make a viable case for the an armor capability in the 82nd. Somali gunmen, armed with an assortment of shoulder-fired rocket-propelled grenades (RPG)s, inflicted serious damage on the lightly-armed and equipped Task Force Ranger, a force whose only available vehicles were thin-skinned high mobility, multi-wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs). Not only would organic armored assets have been able to produce a marked firepower advantage for the US force, but the mere presence of armored vehicles would almost certainly have saved lives and allowed the American soldiers to defend themselves better.<sup>42</sup> The 82nd Airborne Division cannot allow its soldiers to be placed in a similar situation on the battlefield.

Although the 82nd must be prepared to engage and defeat any armored threat it faces, it still appears much more likely that the 82nd Airborne Division will be employed in much the same manner it has been used in the past, that is, as a strategic club that allows the United States to quickly intervene in support of its interests anywhere in the world. In all likelihood, the 82nd will be used to combat the oppressive dictators and "termites" who seem destined to deliver a new form of warfare to the world in the twenty-first century.

How can the United States defeat the "termites" and "bandits" of the future? A conventional division of airborne forces is certainly a viable option, as it possesses all the necessary requisites for employment--rapid strategic mobility with little or no warning and the ability to achieve both strategic and tactical surprise. The question that still remains is: What must that force look like and what capabilities must it possess, at bare minimum, to serve the nation more completely?

<sup>1</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>6</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, *Readiness Standing Operating Procedures* (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 July 1995), 1-1.

<sup>7</sup>"Command Brief," 12.

<sup>8</sup>William M. Steele, Letter to the Paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division (Fort Bragg, NC: 19 September 1994).

<sup>9</sup>John S. Newton, "Soldiers Start Mission with Historic Drop," *The Fayetteville Observer Times*, 16 September 1997, 1.

<sup>10</sup>United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Reference Publication 5-12D: Organization of Marine Corps Forces* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 13 October 1998) 2-4.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Tom Clancy, *Marine: A Guided Tour of a Marine Expeditionary Unit* (New York: Berkley Books, 1996), 217-219.

<sup>14</sup>Discussion with Dr. Bruce Menning, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2 February 2000.

<sup>15</sup>Eighty Second Aviation Brigade, "82nd Aviation Brigade History" (Fort Bragg, NC: 10 January 2000), 2.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>18</sup>Interview with Major John M. Evans, current AH-64 Apache pilot and former aviation liaison officer (ALO) to the 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, 15 February 2000.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>United States Army, ST 100-3: *Battle Book* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, July 1999), 2-62.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Leroy Thompson, *The All Americans: The 82nd Airborne* (Birmingham, England: David & Charles Publishers, 1988), 174.

<sup>23</sup>“Good Bye, Sheridan: What’s Next As the 82nd Loses Only Tank Battalion,” *The Army Times*, 23 September 1996, 14.

<sup>24</sup>John Gordon IV, “The Case for Medium-Weight Army Forces” *Army*, December 1999, 35.

<sup>25</sup>Institute for National Strategic Studies, *Strategic Assessment 1999* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999), xiv-xv.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 265.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 267.

<sup>28</sup>Eliot Cohen, “Where is warfare?” *National Review*, 24 January 2000, 27-28.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Martin L. van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 197.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 207.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 226.

<sup>34</sup>United States Army Southern European Task Force, “Command Brief” (Vicenza, Italy, 1 September 1998), 12.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>36</sup>Gordon, 35.

<sup>37</sup>“Good Bye, Sheridan: What’s Next As the 82nd Loses Only Tank Battalion,” *The Army Times*, 23 September 1996, 14.

<sup>38</sup>*Strategic Assessment 1999*, 37.

<sup>39</sup>Cynthia L. Hayden, *Operation Uphold Democracy: Oral History and Interviews* (Fort Bragg, NC: 1998), 28.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup>The author participated in the preparation for, and near execution of, the airborne invasion of Haiti in September 1994. This “rallying cry” was an oft-heard phrase throughout the planning process.

<sup>42</sup>The author’s opinion, gleaned from the reading of the discussion of this issue in Mark Bowden’s *Blackhawk Down*.

## CHAPTER 6

### PRESENTATION OF FORCE STRUCTURE MODELS

The future 82nd Airborne Division should be able to close twice as fast with more than twice the defensive potency. This will mean equipping it with more gear which packs and stacks more compactly, and arming it with combinations of systems which elevate its ability to fight at standoff distances in the defense of key facilities in close terrain.<sup>1</sup>

Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege

#### Feasibility Screening Criteria

The ultimate structure for the 82nd Airborne Division must possess a unique set of capabilities in order to meet the requirements highlighted by General Wass de Czege, one of the preeminent theorists in the United States Army in the 1980s and a primary author of the 1982 version of FM 100-5, *Operations*. First, as it is required to do now, the division must be able to alert, marshal, and deploy a battalion task force (Division Ready Force One) within eighteen hours. This time standard allows the division to respond to worldwide contingencies with little or no notice. The division's continued adherence to the eighteen hour deployment sequence, as defined in the 82nd Airborne Division Readiness Standing Operating Procedures, also ensures that the battalion (or battalions) designated for deployment will have been properly outfitted to execute their mission-specific contingency operation.<sup>2</sup>

Second, the designated battalion or brigade combat team must be able to execute a forced entry parachute assault anywhere in the world to fight and win against a determined enemy. This includes the ability to execute any of the mission sets dictated in a METL geared towards probable twenty-first century employment scenarios, as defined in chapter five.



Third, the strategic mobility of the 82nd is further defined by the ability of the Division Ready Brigade (DRB) to fit aboard fifty-three C-17 transports, while the entire division must fit aboard 120 C-17s. These are realistic constraints set forth by the United States Air Force in its Strategic Brigade Airdrop (SBA) doctrine. Currently, the Air Force possesses seventy C-17s, enough to deploy a DRB with its habitual support elements. As the C-141 transport fleet deactivates in 2004, the Air Force plans to have 120 mission capable C-17s for transport of the 82nd Airborne Division.<sup>3</sup>

Fourth, the division must be able to deter any potential threat it may face during any one of many possible scenarios. This is a tall order, because in a rapid deployment or strategic contingency role the division may be employed in any sort of environment from Stability and Support Operations (SASO) to a mid-intensity conflict. In this regard, the division's capabilities and combat power then must be sufficient to defeat the threats outlined in chapter five.

Finally, the division must be able to both sustain itself logistically for up to ninety-six hours while protecting itself against any outside threats. Though no measurable time constraint exists for the division's requirement to sustain itself on its own, it is reasonable to assume that within ninety-six hours the division will have secured a viable airhead, thus allowing an unimpeded flow of support into the area of operations. The 1994 planned airborne assault into Haiti is a good example of this. In an interview with the United States Army Center for Military History, the Joint Task Force Commander of OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, LTG Henry H. Shelton, directed that the 82nd carry three days (or seventy-two hours) of supply into its forced entry assault of Haiti.<sup>4</sup> The plan for UPHOLD DEMOCRACY called for the entire 82nd

Airborne Division to be in the area of operations within forty-eight hours. In the case of a single DRF or DRB, ninety-six hours of self-sustainability is a more reasonable planning consideration.

### Force Structure Models for Analysis

With these capability requirements in mind, the analysis of most likely future force structure shifts to an examination of four possible force structure models. The These four models include:

1. The contemporary model, 82nd Airborne Division 2000, as discussed and outlined in chapter five
2. The model that existed ten years ago, 82nd Airborne Division 1990, which mirrors the modern day model but substitutes Apaches for Kiowa Warriors in the Aviation Attack Battalion, and adds a light armor battalion
3. The model which substantially increases both the size and lethality of the current model, referred to as the Hooker Model
4. A lightened, quicker, and less lethal model, the Lean Division, that strips the current division of some of its combat support and combat service support assets

The selection of these four models for comparison and analysis emerged through a systematic process that considered various alternatives meeting the screening criteria already discussed. First, as the 82nd Airborne Division exists in its present structure presumably capable of executing the wartime missions it is currently assigned, the contemporary model had to be evaluated. Second, the model that existed in 1990 was one that stood the test of time; with the exception of upgrades and improvements in weapons systems and technology, the model that existed in 1990 had existed since the

late 1960s and had proven itself during operational deployments to Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and Iraq. Third, the Hooker Model provides a model for analysis that takes the current force structure and significantly upgrades the division's firepower capabilities. Finally, the obvious fourth choice for analysis takes the current model and streamlines the division in order to provide for a significant increase in strategic mobility.

Once each model has been defined, they are compared on the basis of six evaluation criteria: strategic mobility, tactical maneuver, firepower, command and control, sustainability, and force protection. These criteria are defined further in this chapter.

Currently, the 82nd Airborne Division model of 2000 includes three airborne infantry brigades, the division artillery, the aviation brigade, the division support command, light engineer battalion, air defense artillery battalion, signal battalion, military intelligence battalion, personnel support battalions, a military police company, and a chemical company (fig. 3). The force structure for this model was described in detail in the previous chapter.

Though this model differs only slightly from the 1990 version of the 82nd Airborne Division in terms of force structure, the differences between the two amount to a significant loss of firepower and lethality. The major difference between the contemporary model and that of its 1990 predecessor is the absence of both Apache attack helicopters in the aviation brigade and a light armor battalion (fig. 7).<sup>5</sup>

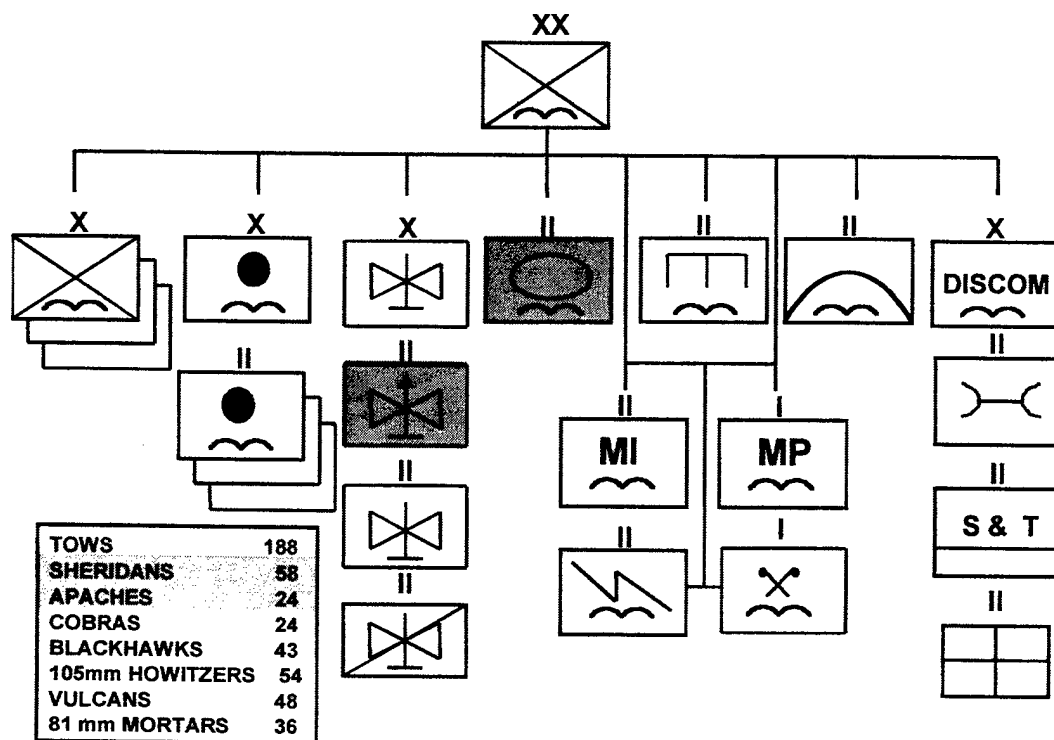


Fig. 7. Task Organization, 82nd Airborne Division, 1990. Source: United States Army, FM 90-26, *Airborne Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 1990), 5.

The 82nd Airborne Division of 1990 was equipped with AH-64 Apaches in the attack aviation battalion and AH-1H Cobras in the division cavalry squadron; each unit manned twenty-four Apaches and Cobras, respectively. With the transfer of Apaches and Cobras to OH-58D Kiowa Warriors in 1993, the 82nd Airborne Division lost its most lethal and mobile armor-killing weapon system. This change stemmed from the inability to deploy the Apache aboard C-130 transports. With the arrival of the C-17, this restriction no longer applies. Four Apaches can be loaded aboard a C-17, just as two OH-58Ds can be loaded on each C-130.<sup>6</sup> Thus, with the introduction of the C-17, which can land on runways comparable in length and composition to that which C-130s can

land, and which can transport up to four Apaches, the inability to transport Apache helicopters with tactical airlift is no longer a viable reason to exclude Apaches from the 82nd Airborne Division's task organization.<sup>7</sup>

The other major difference between the current 82nd Airborne Division and that of 1990 is the absence of a light armor battalion in today's force structure. The reasons for this change were highlighted in chapters four and five. The significance of this loss of capability is monumental in terms of the 82nd Airborne Division's ability to project the firepower necessary to succeed in its mission. The 82nd Airborne Division of 1990 was equipped with a battalion of M551 Sheridan tanks, fifty-eight tanks equipped with a 152mm Shillelagh missile.<sup>8</sup> Though the tanks themselves were old (most were produced by 1964) and difficult to maintain, an extensive research and development program had been undertaken to find a suitable replacement for the system.

The result was the M8 Armored Gun System (AGS), a 25-ton, tracked light armored tank armed with a 105mm main gun.<sup>9</sup> Eight prototypes of the AGS had been built and were ready for testing by the 82nd Airborne Division when, in August 1996, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Dennis J. Reimer, cancelled the project due to its nearly \$100 million price tag. At the same time, General Reimer directed that the 82nd Airborne Division's light armor battalion, the 3rd Battalion, 73rd Armor be deactivated.<sup>10</sup> Tom Clancy, then engaged in his detailed study of the 82nd Airborne Division for his nonfiction book, *Airborne: A Guided Tour of an Airborne Task Force*, says of the cancellation of the AGS program :

Unfortunately, the need to support the expensive peacekeeping operations in places like Bosnia, Haiti, and Rwanda caused the top leadership of the Army to cancel the AGS program, and reprogram the funds. Frankly, given the small size

of the AGS program, this was a bad decision. Unfortunately, without any replacement for the M551, the same Army leaders moved from bad decision-making to outright stupidity when they decided to stand down the 3/73 Armored, thus denying the 82nd even the services of 66 thirty-year-old light tanks.<sup>11</sup>

At present time, there are no plans by the United States Army to reactivate a light armor battalion in the 82nd Airborne Division. When General Reimer ordered the cancellation of the AGS program for the 82nd, he offered four options for antiarmor systems that would provide the 82nd with a viable and lethal tank-killing weapon system. These four options include a combination of weapons and systems that are fielded and are already in place, and those that are being developed and tested right now for future fielding and employment.

First, General Reimer recommended the continued use of the Immediate Ready Company (IRC) from the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia, to augment the DRB. The IRC, consisting of four M1A1 Abrams tanks, four M2A2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles and their supply and support vehicles, is maintained at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Georgia.<sup>12</sup> This company has the same readiness requirement as the DRF-One in the 82nd, that is, it must be able to be wheels-up in eighteen hours. The problem with the IRC concept, however, is that unlike the Sheridans or the AGS which can be rigged and dropped via parachute, neither the M1 tanks nor Bradleys in the heavy IRC can be airdropped. Further, they require seven C-17s to transport the entire company to the objective area.<sup>13</sup>

General Reimer's second option to substitute for the cancellation of the AGS program was the new, man-portable antiarmor system, the Javelin. General Reimer was confident that the Javelin would provide the 82nd Airborne Division with the

armor-killing capability it required to execute its no-notice, contingency operations.<sup>14</sup>

The Javelin is a 90mm, fire and forget weapon with a missile able to penetrate the armor of T-72 tanks.<sup>15</sup> Each infantry rifle platoon of the 82nd is armed with two Javelin systems; this translates to a Brigade combat team equipped with fifty-four Javelin systems. Though the Javelin has proven itself to be a very effective antiarmor weapon, it is still only man portable and thus can move only as fast as the soldier carrying it. It also provides no protection of any kind to the soldier employing the weapon system.

As his third option to fill the void created by the loss of the AGS, General Reimer recommended the line-of-sight antitank (LOSAT) weapon system, projected to be fielded for testing in the 82nd Airborne Division in the summer of 2000.<sup>16</sup> The LOSAT consists of a high kinetic energy round able to defeat all known or projected armor threats out to ranges greater than any armor system in existence. It will be mounted on top of the high mobility, multiwheeled vehicle (HMMWV) already in service in the AT companies of the 82nd, and will replace the TOWS in a one-for-one exchange.<sup>17</sup> The LOSAT, once testing and fielding are completed, will provide the 82nd Airborne Division with a viable armor killing system. As with any system under development, however, tests are not complete and it may be five years before the final product is in the hands of the paratroopers who will employ it.

Finally, General Reimer discussed accelerating the fielding and employment of the Enhanced Fiber Optic Guided Missile (EFOGM), an antiarmor and antihelicopter missile designed to be mounted on a HMMWV chassis that can potentially destroy targets out to fifteen kilometers. The EFOGM, too, will replace the TOWS in the AT companies in a one-for-one exchange.<sup>18</sup> However, until such time as both the LOSAT

and the EFOGM are further tested, approved for fielding, and distributed to the nine antitank companies in the division, the 82nd is still left without this capability, except that which is provided on a limited basis by the Javelin, and the heavy IRC.

The third model for possible future force structure of the 82nd Airborne Division is outlined in a briefing entitled “The Airborne Division in 2010: Proposed Concepts for Organization and Employment,” written by Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Hooker, formally a Special Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and now the commander of an airborne infantry battalion in the 82nd Airborne Division. Hooker’s enhanced division is depicted in figure 8.<sup>19</sup>

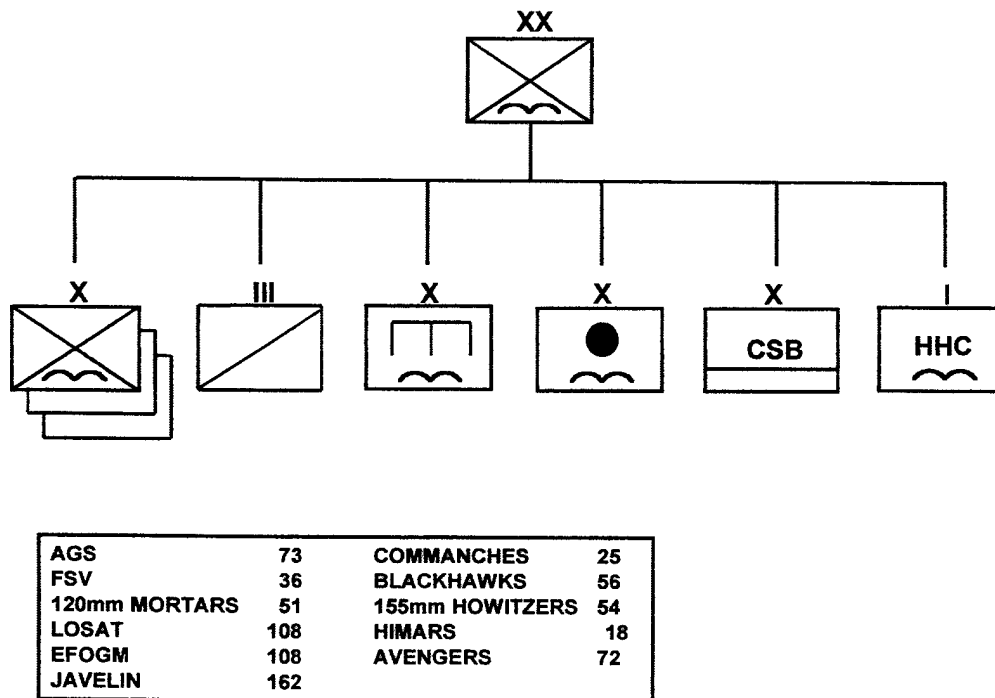
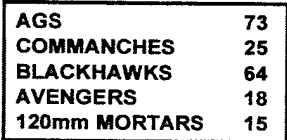


Fig. 8. Task Organization, Hooker Model. Source: Richard A. Hooker, “The Airborne Division in 2010” (Washington, DC: 1998), 5.



At first glance, it appears that the task organization proposed by Hooker greatly increases the size of the division, both significantly enhancing its lethality and firepower while at the same time greatly reducing its strategic deployability. Hooker has greatly enhanced the firepower of the infantry brigade combat team, both by projecting the fielding of the LOSAT and the EFOGM (twelve each per battalion, thirty-six each per brigade) as well as increasing the fire support capabilities of the brigade combat team. Hooker has substituted the organic fire support assets of the infantry battalion, the 81mm mortars, with 120mm towed mortars currently being tested. Most significantly, Hooker has proposed replacing the direct support 105mm towed howitzers with 155mm howitzers, increasing direct support artillery range from 10,000 to 20,000 meters.<sup>20</sup>

Hooker's most significant force structure change proposal involves the addition of a division cavalry regiment (fig. 9).<sup>21</sup> Hooker's cavalry regiment essentially combines the components of today's aviation brigade with a light armor battalion. As figure 9 shows, the Cavalry Regiment proposed by Lieutenant Colonel Hooker is equipped with seventy-three AGS, forty-four in the light armor battalion and twenty-nine in the ground cavalry squadron. The ground troops of the ground cavalry squadron are also equipped with what Hooker calls the Future Scout Vehicle (FSV), presumably the Medium Assault Vehicle (MAV) currently being tested in the Interim Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) review.<sup>22</sup> The current aviation attack battalion is eliminated in favor of the air cavalry/light attack squadron, consisting of twenty-five RH-66 Comanches and one UH-60L Blackhawk. The assault squadron, equipped with thirty-eight UH-60L Blackhawks, is essentially unchanged from the aviation assault battalion of today's 82nd Airborne Division.



The Division Artillery (DIVARTY) has also grown significantly in Hooker's proposal. As previously stated, the fifty-four 105mm towed howitzers found in today's 82nd DIVARTY are replaced by fifty-four 155mm towed howitzers. There is no change to the task organization of DIVARTY with respect to the three direct support artillery battalions, each equipped with eighteen 155mm howitzers, and each providing direct support artillery fires to one of the three infantry brigades. However, Hooker has proposed adding a general support artillery battalion equipped with eighteen High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS).<sup>23</sup> The HIMARS is mounted on a five-ton chassis and can be transported aboard a C-130 (or C-17) aircraft. It fires the entire suite of Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) munitions, to include the Army Tactical

Missile System (ATACMS), and thus can provide the 82nd Airborne Division with organic counterfire and suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) that it does not currently possess.<sup>24</sup>

Though there is no doubt that Hooker's proposal for the 82nd Airborne Division of 2010 greatly increases the division's lethality and firepower, it also dramatically raises the United States Air Force strategic lift requirements needed to deploy the division into any area of operations. As outlined in the 82nd Airborne Division command and capabilities briefing and verified by the current Air Force Strategic Brigade Airdrop (SBA) review, a current brigade combat team from the 82nd Airborne Division requires fifty-three C-17 sorties to deliver it to the objective area: twenty-four to drop personnel and twenty-nine to deliver equipment. Forty-six additional aircraft will airland to deliver the remainder of the brigade support package and the IRC.<sup>25</sup>

The 82nd Airborne Division Readiness Standing Operating Procedures dictate that two C-141s (or two C-17s) are required to deliver a battery (minus) of four 105mm howitzers via parachute drop.<sup>26</sup> The entire battery of six howitzers, with its organic command and control capability intact, requires four C-141s or C-17s.<sup>27</sup> The battery of 155mm howitzers proposed by Lieutenant Hooker in his model for 2010 requires sixteen C-141s or C-17s to deliver the same number of 155mm howitzers (six) via parachute assault.<sup>28</sup> Though the range of direct support artillery would be increased from 14,000 meters with the current 105mm howitzer to nearly 24,000 meters with the new light 155mm howitzer,<sup>29</sup> this substitution comes at a cost of twelve additional C-17s, an increase of over forty percent of the total number of C-17s required for all heavy drop

equipment. This is a very significant factor at a time when the United States Air Force has only seventy C-17s in operation, and projects only 120 C-17s by the year 2010.<sup>30</sup>

Commentators at the tactical level are also quick to point out that fielding the 155mm howitzers in the 82nd also greatly decrease its ability to conduct tactical maneuver. At present time, the M119 105mm howitzers are easily transportable via slingload by UH-60 Blackhawk. The proposed 155mm howitzers are too large for this, and must instead be transported beneath CH-47 Chinook cargo helicopters, which are not organic to the division's aviation brigade. Thus, moving the 155mm howitzers around the battlefield quickly will be much more difficult to do than with the present day 105mm howitzers.<sup>31</sup>

The final model for future force structure is an 82nd Airborne Division that is much smaller and leaner than its contemporary counterpart, allowing for increased strategic mobility at a cost of lethality and firepower (fig. 10). As figure 10 shows, the division has been stripped of its DIVARTY, thus losing its organic long-range fire support assets. However, as in Hooker's model, 120mm mortars have replaced the 81mm mortars found in today's infantry battalions (four per battalion). These newly-fielded 120mm mortars, firing rounds with extended ranges between 10,000 and 12,000 meters, greatly reduce the requirement for organic artillery fires.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the 155mm howitzers proposed by Hooker for his future DIVARTY, are currently found in a general support role at the XVIIIth Airborne Corps Artillery. As they are today, these artillery assets can be task organized to support any mission in which the 82nd is involved, should the need arise.

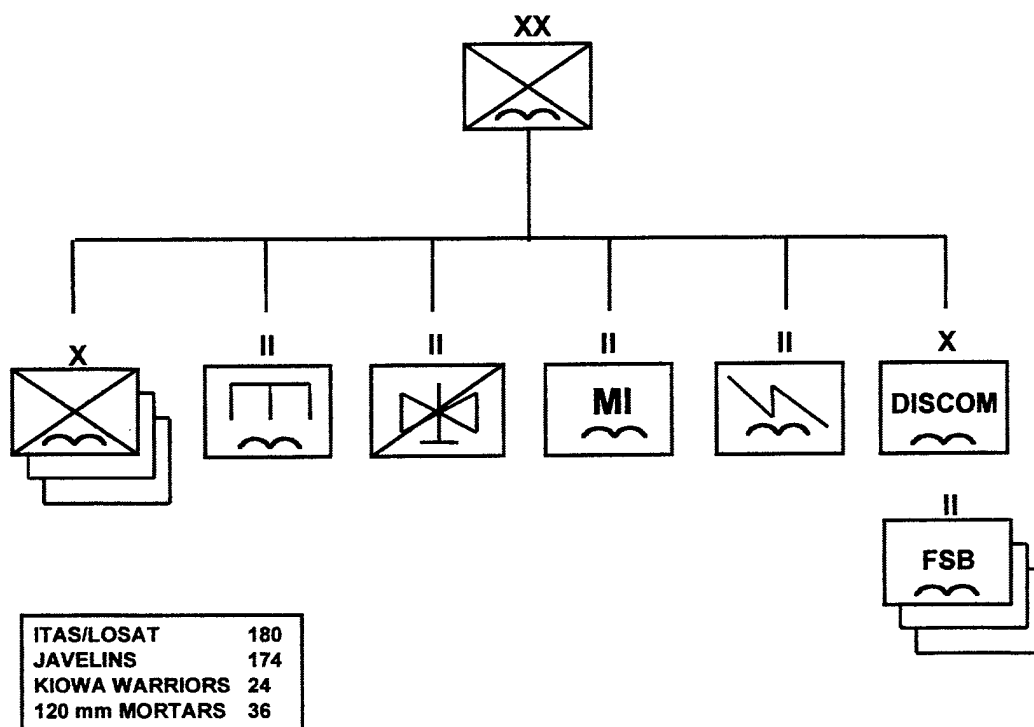


Fig. 10 . Task Organization, Lean Division Model.

The division has also been stripped of its organic attack and assault aviation assets, as well as its organic air defense artillery assets. In the same manner as the 155mm howitzers that are task organized to support specific missions, attack and assault aviation, and air defense artillery can be task organized from units already in existence at XVIIIth Airborne Corps.

The impact of this requirement would be significant in terms of the brigade combat team's ability to execute its wartime mission. Currently, a brigade combat team in the 82nd trains with its habitual combat, combat support, and combat service support elements throughout its entire training cycle (table 1). This includes local field training exercises, computer assisted exercises (CAX) and command post exercises (CPX), as

well as deployments to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and National Training Center (NTC). When a brigade combat team assumes its mission posture (table 1), these units also stand the Operational Readiness Survey (ORS) inspection with the brigade, and are prepared to deploy with the brigade in the event of a real-world contingency mission.<sup>33</sup> Though thorough and habitual training between these units at the corps and division level would help to enhance combat readiness, it is still no substitute for the training and support relationship that currently exists between the brigade combat teams and their habitual combat, combat support, and combat service support elements.

Thus, there are four proposed models for the future force structure of the 82nd Airborne Division. Though all four of these models meet possess varying degrees of capability, they all meet the feasibility screening criteria outlined in the beginning of this chapter. These four models will be analyzed in detail in chapter seven to determine which is the best model, and to specify what capabilities are required to form the right force structure for the 82nd Airborne Division of 2010.

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<sup>1</sup>Huba Wass de Czege, Unpublished Statement to the Army Staff, Leavenworth, KS: 18 October 1999, 1.

<sup>2</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, *82nd Airborne Division Readiness Standing Operating Procedures* (Fort Bragg, NC: June 1995), 13-A-1.

<sup>3</sup>Eighteenth Airborne Corps, "Strategic Brigade Airdrop" (Fort Bragg, NC: November 1999), 1-4.

<sup>4</sup>Cynthia L. Hayden, *JTF-180: Operation Uphold Democracy, Oral History and Interviews* (Fort Bragg, NC: 1998), 83.

<sup>5</sup>United States Army, FM 90-26, *Airborne Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 1990), 5.

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Major John M. Evans, current AH-64 Apache pilot and former Aviation Liaison Officer (ALO) to the 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, 15 February 2000.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Leroy Thompson, *The All Americans: The 82nd Airborne* (Birmingham, England: David & Charles Publishers, 1988), 173-174.

<sup>9</sup>"Army Trades Off AGS System for Cash," *The Army Times*, 5 February 1996, 3.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Tom Clancy, *Airborne: A Guided Tour of An Airborne Task Force* (New York: Berkley Books, 1997), 213.

<sup>12</sup>"Good Bye, Sheridan: What's Next As the 82nd Loses Only Tank Battalion," *The Army Times*, 12 September 1996, 15.

<sup>13</sup>"Strategic Brigade Airdrop," 9.

<sup>14</sup>"Good Bye, Sheridan," 16.

<sup>15</sup>United States Army, *1999-2000 Green Book* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Press, 1999), 276.

<sup>16</sup>"Good Bye, Sheridan," 16.

<sup>17</sup>*1999-2000 Green Book*, 277.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Richard A. Hooker, "The Airborne Division in 2010: Proposed Concepts for Organization and Employment" (Washington, DC: 1998), 5.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>24</sup>*1999-2000 Green Book*, 300.

<sup>25</sup>“Strategic Brigade Airdrop,” 9.

<sup>26</sup>*82nd Airborne Division Readiness Standing Operating Procedures*, 6-J-2.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>First Battalion, Three Twenty-First Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, “Mission Aircraft Requirements” (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 January 2000), 1-4.

<sup>29</sup>*1999-2000 Green Book*, 306.

<sup>30</sup>“Strategic Brigade Airdrop,” 20.

<sup>31</sup>Interview with Major John Drago, former battery executive officer in the 82nd Airborne Division Artillery, and commander of a M119 105mm howitzer battery in the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Light). Fort Leavenworth, KS, 6 March 2000.

<sup>32</sup>*1999-2000 Green Book*, 306-307.

<sup>33</sup>This information is gleaned from the author’s nearly five-year tour of duty with the 82nd Airborne Division, during which time he served as an infantry battalion supply officer (S4), a rifle company commander, and as the commander of the 82nd Airborne Division Long Range Surveillance Detachment (LRSD).



## CHAPTER 7

### ANALYSIS

#### Evaluation Criteria Defined

The four task organization models presented in chapter six allow for a myriad of force capabilities in which to compare the models against each other. For the purpose of this research project, however, the author has chosen six evaluation criteria: strategic mobility, tactical maneuver, firepower, command and control, sustainability, and force protection. The author chose these six criteria after carefully considering all possible alternatives for analysis, and by combining the qualitative analysis executed for the research project with the historical examples of the past fifty years.

Strategic mobility is the most important evaluation criterion because every other function and capability of the 82nd Airborne Division depends upon its ability to conduct its first METL task--alert, marshal, and deploy within eighteen hours. Without strategic mobility, the utility of the 82nd to combat termites and bandits would be rendered obsolete. Firepower is a critical factor for analysis, because once it arrives in the objective area the division's success depends upon its ability to close with and destroy the enemy on the ground. Tactical maneuver retains importance because it represents the capacity to execute subsequent missions following seizure of the airhead and initial assault objectives. Sustainability is a necessary evaluation criterion to ensure that the future force structure can support itself in an austere environment or when follow-on support forces are not readily available. Finally, the author chose command and control and force protection as evaluation criteria to ensure that the ultimate force structure

considered the division's ability to both control itself in battle and protect itself from outside threats.

Combined with the qualitative analysis already considered, comparison of the four force structure models using the six evaluation criteria is calculated to select the best viable alternative future force structure for the 82nd Airborne Division. Comparison also facilitates discussion of those capabilities not inherent in the final product that might provide additional and necessary capabilities in light of previously identified requirements.

Strategic mobility is defined in Joint Publication 1.02 as "the capability to deploy and sustain military forces worldwide in support of national strategy."<sup>1</sup> This relates to the 82nd Airborne Division in its ability to accomplish the first of its mission essential tasks, that is, alert, marshal, and deploy anywhere in the world within eighteen hours of notification.<sup>2</sup>

The strategic mobility of the 82nd Airborne Division is entirely a function of the ability of the United States Air Force to deliver the division into a designated area of operations. This capability is constrained by two key facts. First, the C-141 fleet, which is the backbone of the strategic airdrop fleet, is scheduled for deactivation in 2004. Second, there are projected to be 120 C-17s in the strategic airlift fleet in 2004, replacing the aging C-141s.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the strategic mobility of the 82nd Airborne Division, by 2004, is dependent upon the use of 120 operational C-17s. The lift requirements for a contemporary brigade task force of the 82nd Airborne division include twenty-four C-17s for personnel (2448 total personnel) and twenty-nine C-17s for delivery of heavy equipment.<sup>4</sup> Sixty-seven

C-17s are then left for either the delivery, via parachute assault, of another brigade task force, or the delivery of additional heavy equipment and personnel through airland operations. This also assumes that the Operational Rate (OR) of the existing C-17s is at 100 percent, which will never be the case. Making the division any larger than it already is will obviously affect its strategic mobility and deployability. Therefore, the most logical division structure in terms of its strategic forced entry capability is one that is either the same size, or smaller, than the current operational model.

The ability of the United States Air Force to maintain trained and ready crews is also essential for the success of the strategic airdrop of the 82nd. Not only must these crews be proficient in the intricacies of airborne insertion operations, but they must also be held to the very same readiness requirements as the paratroopers they deliver to the battlefield. Thus, the appropriate number of air crews must maintain, at all times, the two-hour recall status of the DRB as well as the requirement to have their C-17s in the air within eighteen hours of mission notification (N-Hour). The linkage of the air crews' readiness requirements with those of the DRB will ensure that no time is lost due to the unavailability of trained and ready air crews.

In addition to the availability of C-17 airlift platforms, analysis of strategic mobility for the four proposed models is constrained by two other criteria. These two constraints are the time it takes to drop an entire DRF or DRB into an objective area (time of delivery), and the time it takes to rig a DRF or DRB for parachute assault (rigging time).

The delivery time is simple to measure, and has been continually tested by the 82nd Airborne Division, both in combat and during countless training exercises. Both

the Army and Air Force agree on these time constraints; identical standards are published by both the 82nd in its "Command Brief," and by the Air Force in its "Strategic Brigade Airdrop" brief. According to both, an entire DRB, including its three organic infantry battalions and direct support artillery battalion, engineer company and air defense artillery battery, can be delivered through parachute assault in thirty minutes.<sup>5</sup> This requires the use of fifty-three C-17s, as previously discussed.

The Army and Air Force also agree that if this same DRB is delivered to the objective area through airlanding operations, the time required to execute increases from thirty minutes to twenty-nine hours. Thus, a DRB that is not equipped for or capable of parachute assault requires an additional twenty-nine hours to close on an objective area than a force that executes a parachute assault.

Rigging time is far more difficult to quantify and measure. However, it is still an important component of strategic mobility. Under normal readiness conditions, only the vehicles and heavy equipment from the DRF One are rigged for parachute assault and maintained in that condition.<sup>6</sup> Thus, if a no-notice contingency operation occurs requiring a DRB-sized unit rather than merely the DRF One, the entire complement of brigade vehicles and heavy equipment will need to be quickly rigged for parachute assault. Though the 82nd Airborne Division and its Air Force lift counterparts are quite proficient at this task, the time to complete it will weigh heavily on the division's ability to accomplish its designated mission. Furthermore, the larger the equipment package required to rig, the longer the time required to prepare the DRB for parachute assault.

Tactical maneuver is the next evaluation criterion used in the analysis. Both the requirements for tactical maneuver and firepower seem to inversely effect the strategic

mobility of the 82nd, but at what cost? Tactical maneuver is defined by FM 100-5, *Operations*, as "the employment of forces through offensive or defensive operations to achieve relative positional advantage over an enemy force to achieve tactical, operational, or strategic objectives."<sup>7</sup> As light infantry, once an airborne insertion is complete the 82nd executes its tactical maneuver capability through three primary sources. First, the anti-tank companies that exist in today's force provide tactical mobility to a small degree. Because every option examined in this survey proposes essentially the same formation for these anti-tank companies (with varying degrees of armament), there is no distinction between options in terms of the tactical maneuver provided by the nine anti-tank companies in the division.

Assault helicopters, specifically the UH-60 Blackhawks found in today's aviation brigade, provide the 82nd with its most effective means of tactical maneuver. As previously discussed, today's division includes an assault aviation battalion composed of forty-three UH-60 Blackhawks. The 1990 model also included forty-three Blackhawks, while the Hooker model includes thirty-eight Blackhawks in the assault helicopter squadron of the cavalry regiment. The only model in which assault aviation assets are not organic to the division is the lean model. Of course, when neither of these assets is available nor has yet to arrive on the ground, the division executes its tactical mobility the way light infantry has done since Hannibal crossed the Alps--with its feet.

Attack helicopters and the presence of a light armor battalion in the division task organization also increase the tactical maneuver of the division. Light armor will not always be used to transport troops on the battlefield, but an armor force would allow the division to achieve positional advantage, particularly if this armor could be dropped via

parachute assault, as were both the old M551 Sheridans and the once-projected M8 AGS. Attack helicopters provide a marked advantage in terms of tactical maneuver, as they are the division's fastest moving and most lethal weapon system on the battlefield.

As highlighted in chapter one, this examination of capabilities does not incorporate the Chief of Staff of the Army's ongoing restructuring initiative, currently labeled the Initial Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), as a possible option for force structure change within the 82nd Airborne Division. The addition, or substitution, of a brigade of motorized vehicles would certainly enhance the tactical maneuverability of the division, allowing a brigade to move around the battlefield quite effectively. The gain in tactical maneuverability would come at a huge cost to strategic mobility, however, and would also eliminate the forced entry capability of one-third of the division's maneuver assets. This cost is too high. As asserted previously, the 82nd Airborne Division must not be affected by the IBCT restructuring initiative.

Firepower is defined by FM 100-5, *Operations* as "the amount of fire that may be delivered by a position, unit, or weapon system. Firepower provides destructive force; it is essential in defeating the enemy's ability and will to fight."<sup>8</sup> The firepower basis for this analysis lies in five categories of weapons systems. These five categories are infantry brigades, anti-tank weapons, armor systems, attack helicopter platforms, and indirect fire systems, to include both mortars and artillery. As this analysis projects out to 2010, all weapons systems utilized in the comparison will include not only those systems employed today, but also those systems under development that are projected for delivery to the field by the year 2010.

Command and control is defined in Joint Publication 1-02 as

The exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission.<sup>9</sup>

Command and control in the 82nd Airborne Division involves those functions that allow the division leadership to manage the battlefield operating systems while engaged in combat operations. All command, control, and communications systems are considered when comparing the command and control capabilities of different models, as well as the platforms on which those systems are mounted. This research project assumes that each of the four possible force structure options contains a robust and viable command and control capability, enabling the division to control not only the internal units organic to the division, but also the external units supporting the division in any combat operation. These units include the Air Force transport and fire support platforms that the division relies so heavily upon to execute its combat missions. This research also assumes that the division's command and control capability allows it to communicate effectively across the joint and multinational front, particularly when the division is a member of a joint or multinational task force.

Another valuable component of command and control is the division's ability to effectively manage training throughout the division. A division that contains all of its own organic combat, combat support, and combat service support assets will obviously be much easier to command and control than a division whose assets are not organic to the unit. In addition, a division headquarters that habitually commands and controls

organic units during routine training will certainly be much more successful when called upon to execute complex operations in combat.

Sustainability is defined in Joint Publication 1-02 as “the ability to maintain the necessary level and duration of operational level to achieve military objectives. Sustainability is a function of providing for and maintaining those levels of ready forces, materiel, and consumables necessary to support military effort.”<sup>10</sup> Sustainability from the perspective of the 82nd Airborne Division, then, is the division’s ability not only to supply itself initially on a forced entry combat operation, but to maintain that supply and support through the first ninety-six hours of operations in theater. The 82nd plans to do this through pre-stockage of consumables on its initial forced entry insertion, as well as through planned and sustained resupply by cargo delivery system (CDS).

The final evaluation criterion, force protection, is defined in FM 100-5, *Operations* as the primary element of combat power that “conserves the fighting potential of a force so that commanders can apply it at the decisive time and place.” The four components of force protection are: operational security; the soldier’s health and morale; safety; and the avoidance of fratricide.<sup>11</sup> Force protection, though much more difficult to quantify than the five other evaluation criteria, is nonetheless critical to the selection of the proper future force structure of the 82nd Airborne Division. A division model that does not take into account force protection is one that leaves itself open and vulnerable to attacks from all areas of the asymmetric battlefield.



### Analysis of Force Structure Models

With these six evaluation criteria in mind, the author has developed a matrix to compare the four force structure models with each other to determine the most viable force structure model for the future. The four force structure models are compared with each other using the six evaluation criteria already discussed. These evaluation criteria have been weighted by their relative degree of importance for future capabilities, with all criteria adding up to a total of 1.00.

As every other function and capability of the 82nd Airborne Division depends upon its ability to deploy into a designated objective area, strategic mobility has been given the largest relative weight, .30. The three components used to measure strategic mobility are: the requirement for and availability of C-17s for transport; the time required to get the DRF, DRB or Division into the objective area; and the time it takes to rig the appropriate force and its equipment for parachute assault. Firepower, the obvious second most important capability for the future, is weighted just below strategic mobility, at .25. Its five components are infantry brigades, anti-tank systems, attack helicopters, light armor, and indirect fire systems. Tactical maneuver is defined by its four components, anti-tank companies, assault helicopters, attack helicopters, and light armor systems, and is weighted at .20. Sustainability follows tactical maneuver, and is weighted at .15. Command and control and force protection are both weighted at .05. The results of this analysis are found in table 2.

Table 2. Force Structure Analysis Table

	82nd Abn Div 2000	82nd Abn Div 1990	Hooker Model	Lean Div
<b>Strategic Mobility (.30)</b>				
C-17 Requirement	.100	.090	.070	.100
Delivery Time	.100	.100	.070	.100
Rigging Time	<u>.100</u>	<u>.090</u>	<u>.070</u>	<u>.100</u>
	<b>.300</b>	<b>.280</b>	<b>.210</b>	<b>.300</b>
<b>Tactical Maneuver (.20)</b>				
AT Companies	.050	.050	.050	.05
Attack Helicopters	.025	.050	.050	.000
Assault Helicopters	.050	.050	.050	.000
Light Armor	<u>.000</u>	<u>.050</u>	<u>.050</u>	<u>.000</u>
	<b>.125</b>	<b>.200</b>	<b>.200</b>	<b>.050</b>
<b>Firepower(.25)</b>				
Infantry Brigades	.050	.050	.050	.050
AT Systems	.050	.050	.050	.050
Attack Helicopters	.025	.050	.050	.000
Light Armor	.000	.035	.050	.000
Indirect Fire	<u>.050</u>	<u>.035</u>	<u>.050</u>	<u>.025</u>
	<b>.175</b>	<b>.220</b>	<b>.250</b>	<b>.125</b>
<b>Command and Control (.05)</b>	.050	.050	.050	.025
<b>Sustainability (.15)</b>	.125	.125	.100	<b>.150</b>
<b>Force Protection (.05)</b>	.050	.050	.050	.025
<b>Total (1.0)</b>	<b>.825</b>	<b>.925</b>	<b>.860</b>	<b>.650</b>

The results of the analysis in table 2 indicate that the force structure that existed for the 82nd Airborne Division in 1990 is superior to either that which exists today, the structure proposed by Lieutenant Colonel Hooker, or that which a leaner, more mobile division may possess. The possession of a light armor battalion, along with Apaches in the attack aviation battalion, provides the division with tremendous firepower and tactical mobility. Most importantly, these additional assets have not increased the size of the division to the extent that its strategic mobility is overly affected. Thus, this force structure allows for a division that can both deploy rapidly as well as accomplish its designated mission on the other end.

By comparison, Lieutenant Colonel Hooker's proposed task organization is superior to the other three models in terms of its firepower and tactical maneuver. This is due to the fact that Hooker has outfitted his division with a light armored cavalry squadron and an attack helicopter squadron in his cavalry regiment. What Hooker's model possesses in firepower and tactical maneuver, however, it lacks greatly in strategic mobility and sustainability. Simply put, Hooker's proposal is very sound with regard to its ability to close with and destroy the enemy; it is just too bulky to move around the world in a hurry.

Though the lean division model scores high marks for its strategic mobility and sustainability, it falls far short in tactical maneuver, firepower, command and control, and force protection. The lack of organic attack and assault aviation, as well as the absence of organic field artillery assets, make this model too lean to serve its intended purpose. Just as significant, due to the fact that most of the division's combat multipliers are not found organically within the division, there will be a significant price to pay by way of

training management. This will greatly effect the division's ability both to synchronize the battle as well as to command and control the fight.

Most telling in the numerical comparison of the four models is the fact that today's division is superior to the other three only in terms of strategic mobility. Though strategic mobility is the most important evaluation criterion, the superiority in this area is far outweighed by the contemporary lack of firepower and tactical maneuver. These results are most attributable to the lack of Apaches in the attack aviation battalion and the absence of a light armor battalion. Thus, the need for change, a structure that looks similar to the 82nd Airborne Division in 1990, but combining many of the changes proposed by Lieutenant Colonel Hooker, is readily apparent.

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<sup>1</sup>Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, *Joint Terms and Definitions* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, April 1999), 424.

<sup>2</sup>Eighty Second Airborne Division, "Command Brief" (Fort Bragg, NC: December 1999), 4.

<sup>3</sup>Eighteenth Airborne Corps, "Strategic Brigade Airdrop," (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 December 1999), 12.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>6</sup>*82nd Airborne Division Readiness Standing Operating Procedures*, 2-.

<sup>7</sup>United States Army, FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, June 1993), 2-13.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 2-10.

<sup>9</sup>Joint Publication 1-02, 87.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 280.

<sup>11</sup>FM 100-5, 2-10.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has analyzed four distinct force structure models for the 82nd Airborne Division, combining six important evaluation criteria to compare the strengths and weaknesses of these four models. The results of this analysis clearly show that the division structure that existed in 1990 far exceeds the force structure in place now, and was much more strategically mobile than the model proposed by Hooker in his 1998 briefing. Thus, the optimal answer to the research question lies somewhere in between what Hooker has proposed, and what the 82nd Airborne Division looked like in 1990.

First, the research project and subsequent analysis has demonstrated that in order for the 82nd Airborne Division to project the firepower necessary to win on the twenty-first century battlefield, it must reactivate its light armor battalion. This armor battalion would be equipped with parachute capable Armored Gun Systems, either the M8 AGS that was scrapped in 1996, or a comparable system that mounts a 105mm main gun and has sufficient armor protection to survive and stand alone on the modern battlefield. The structure of the battalion would look much like it did in 1996, that is, it would be comprised of three light armor companies, each with fourteen AGS systems (four per platoon, and two in the company headquarters), and each would serve in a direct support role for the three maneuver brigades. Since both the firepower capabilities as well as the air drop tests for the AGS were conducted prior to its elimination in 1996, bringing the AGS back on line would not be a terribly difficult endeavor.

Second, the analysis has also clearly shown that the absence of Apache attack helicopters in today's 82nd Airborne Division severely restricts both the firepower and

tactical mobility of the division; thus they must be reinstated. The additional speed, firepower, and armament that the Apache possesses beyond the lightly armed Kiowa Warrior make it an absolute necessity for the 82nd Airborne Division. Analysis has also shown that the arrival of the C-17 as a means of both tactical and strategic lift has greatly enhanced the Air Force's ability to move heavy equipment into remote areas with immature infrastructure and unimproved airfields. Thus, the Apache, once thought to be too big and bulky to move with the 82nd Airborne Division, can be readily transported aboard the C-17. The Apache can be also quickly be replaced by the RAH-66 Commanche once that system is fielded.

A few of Hooker's proposals retain validly, and thus should be implemented into the future force structure of the 82nd Airborne Division. First, the substitution of 120mm mortars for the 81mm mortars currently found in the light infantry battalions must occur immediately. The 120mm mortar will initially extend the range of organic infantry battalion fire support from 5,600 meters to 7,240 meters. Once the extended range round is fielded, the reach of the 120mm mortar will be extended beyond 10,000 meters.<sup>1</sup> The 120mm mortar can be employed with the identical means that the 81mm mortar is employed, and thus will greatly increase the firepower capabilities of the infantry brigades and battalions. The size and weight of the larger mortar rounds obviously require greater lift and storage capability, and thus will impact tactical mobility to some degree. This cost is necessary given the increased capability the 120mm mortar provides.

Second, Hooker's proposed substitution of 155mm howitzers for the 105mm howitzers currently found in the artillery battalions should be seriously considered. At present, the M198 155mm howitzer weighs 15,750 pounds and is too large to sling-load

with the UH-60 Blackhawk.<sup>2</sup> Also, as discussed in chapter six the current 155mm howitzer significantly increases the strategic lift required to deliver the howitzer batteries to the battlefield. Fielding and employment of the experimental M777 light 155mm howitzer will change all this. The M777 weighs approximately 8,200 pounds. Though this is still more than twice the weight of the M119A1 105mm howitzer (3,340 pounds), the M777 can be sling-loaded with a Blackhawk. Most importantly, the M777 extends the range of organic artillery support from 14,000 meters to approximately 24,000 meters.<sup>3</sup> Though parachute drop tests have not yet been conducted on the M777, it is safe to assume that the strategic lift requirements for the M777 will fall somewhere between current requirements for transport of the M198 155mm howitzer and the M119A1 105mm howitzer. The Army plans to begin production of the M777 in late 2003.<sup>4</sup>

Third, the replacement of the TOW with the EFOGM and the LOSAT in the anti-armor companies is also a valid proposal. In their current testing stages, both systems have proved far superior to the TOW, and thus will greatly enhance the tank killing capability of the 82nd once the systems are fielded. It is safe to assume that both systems will be available for fielding within the next three to four years.<sup>5</sup>

Fourth, Hooker has also proposed eliminating the Air Defense Artillery (ADA) Battalion and replacing it with four ADA batteries, each organic to the three maneuver brigades and the aviation brigade.<sup>6</sup> This both lightens the division as well as enhances the organic capability of the brigades. Each battery is equipped with eighteen Stinger man-portable air defense systems (MANPADs) and six Avenger air defense systems, providing the infantry battalions with six of each system.



Finally, Hooker has proposed reorganizing the Division Support Command so that it contains not only the direct support Forward Support Battalions (FSBs), which he renames Combat Support Battalions (CSBs), but also the Personnel Support Battalion (PSB), Military Intelligence Battalion, Signal Battalion, Chemical/NBC Company, and the Military Police Company. For purposes of command and control, and intelligence collection management at the division level, this study recommends maintaining the Military Intelligence and Signal Battalions at the division. Inclusion of the Personnel Support Battalion, and the Chemical and Military Police companies in the DISCOM, however, is certainly a valid recommendation. Hence, the proposed force structure for the 82nd Airborne Division in 2010 is shown in figure 11.

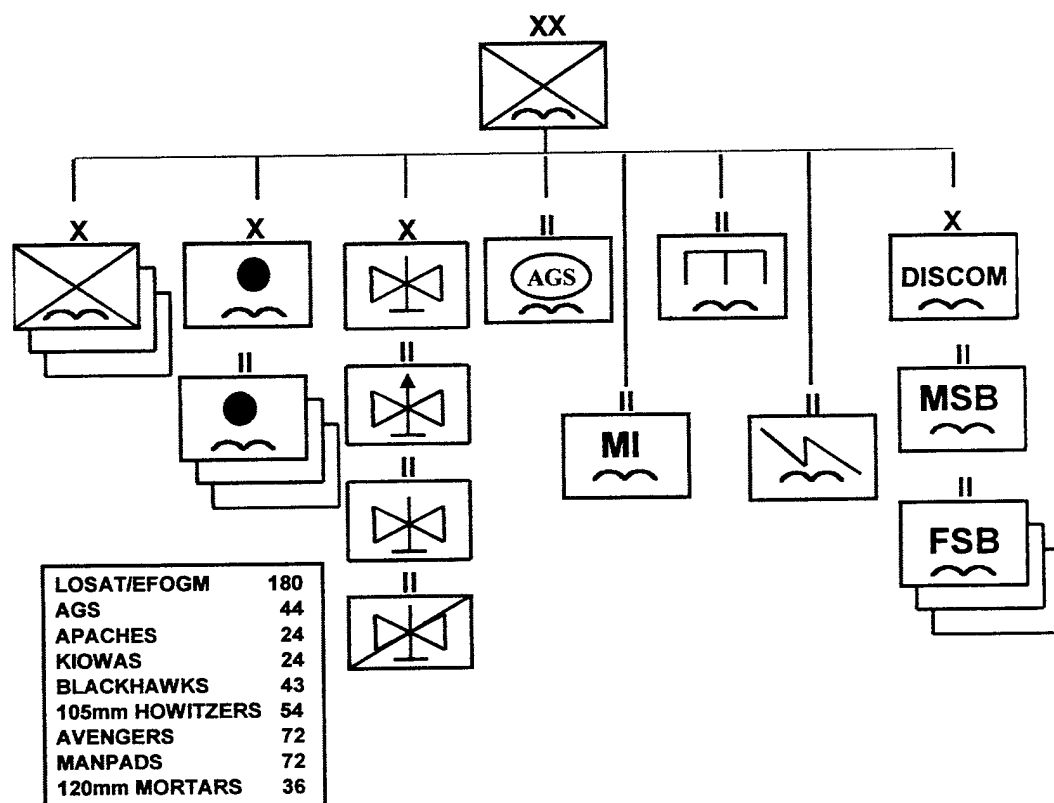


Fig. 11. Proposed Task Organization, 82nd Airborne Division, 2010.

This proposed task organization for the 82nd Airborne Division of the future maximizes the division's firepower, tactical maneuver ability, and command and control capabilities, while minimizing additional sustainment requirements and the force protection risk. The division maintains the present configuration of its infantry brigades and battalions, while upgrading its anti-tank capability with the addition of the EFOGM and/or LOSAT. It also enhances the organic fire support capability of the infantry brigades with the substitution of the 120mm mortar for the 81mm mortars currently found in the infantry battalions.

With this proposal, the division also reactivates its light armor battalion and rearms its attack aviation battalion with Apache attack helicopters. These two additions serve greatly to increase both the overall firepower and tactical maneuver capability of the entire division, along with the firepower and tactical maneuver of a brigade combat team when it is alerted and deployed as a DRB. The division would be capable of executing all of its assigned missions in the lower end of the combat spectrum, but it would also be able to protect itself against a rapidly evolving threat with unknown capabilities in the higher end of the operational spectrum.

Most importantly, the force structure proposed by this research project allows the 82nd to maintain its current readiness posture without handicapping itself by a loss of strategic mobility. The 82nd Airborne Division of 2010 must be able to alert, marshal, and deploy with little or no notice to conduct forced entry combat operations anywhere in the world. At the same time, it must be able to fight and win on the ground against a determined enemy who understands the terrain and does not fight by the rules. The

division must also be able to command and control itself in the area of operations, sustain itself for up to ninety-six hours, and protect itself against all outside threats.

The force structure proposed by this research effectively ensures that the 82nd Airborne Division possesses all these capabilities. This proposal also guarantees that the 82nd Airborne Division of 2010 remains the viable force that it has been for over fifty years, and that its value to the United States of America--strategically, operationally, and tactically--is not diminished.

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<sup>1</sup>United States Army, *1999-2000 Green Book* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1999), 306-307.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 306.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 277.

<sup>6</sup>Richard A. Hooker, "The Airborne Division in 2010: Proposed Concepts for Organization and Employment" (Washington, DC, 1998), 29.

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